

STARS AND STRIPES®

**Julia Roberts
gives birth
to twins**
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qualifying for huge
bonuses to re-enlist**
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give defenses
the day off**
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Volume 63, No. 227 © EPSS 2004

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2004

50¢

Flu vaccine to be available to Europe clinics in a week

No influenza outbreaks reported so far, officials say Page 3



**SHOULD
MEDICAL
MARIJUANA
BE
LEGAL
?**

**Supreme Court hears
Calif. woman's case**

Page 8

Angel Raich kneels beside jars of marijuana at her Oakland, Calif., home in early November. Beset by a nightmarish list of ailments that includes tumors in her brain and uterus, seizures, spasms and nausea, she said she has been able to find comfort only in the marijuana that is prescribed by her doctor. She filed suit against the federal government seeking legal use of marijuana.

AP

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Slain baby in Texas: The attorney for a woman who admitted killing her baby daughter by severing the child's arms says his client is disoriented.

Dena Schlosser of Plano, Texas, is charged with capital murder. Her 11-month-old daughter, Margaret, died last week after her arms were severed.

"She's very confused about her situation," David Haynes, Schlosser's court-appointed attorney, said in Monday's edition of The Dallas Morning News. "I don't think she's presently competent to stand trial."

Divorce from father: A judge has ordered the legal guardians of a New Hampshire boy who "divorced" his murderer father to explain why they have not provided an accounting of the teenager's finances.

Ron and Rita Lazisky, of Sandown, N.H., were ordered by Norfolk County Probate Judge Robert Langlois to appear in court to explain why they should not be found in contempt of a court order, Ron Lazisky said.

However, the Laziskys never got Langlois' order to produce an accounting, Lazisky said. They only learned of it two weeks ago when their former lawyer got a call from the court clerk asking why they hadn't submitted it.

Oklahoma City bombing: Terry Nichols admitted during plea negotiations in his state trial last year that he played a major role in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, a newspaper reported Sunday.

Nichols admitted to prosecutors in a signed statement that he helped Timothy McVeigh make the bomb that killed 168 people in the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in 1995, The Oklahoma reported.

Nichols, 49, is serving life sentences without parole for separate convictions in state and federal courts for his role in the bombings.

World

Russian school seizure: A top Russian intelligence official unveiled a \$49 million budget for rebuilding the scarred town of Beslan, where more than 330 people were killed in the aftermath of a school hostage-taking by Chechen and other rebels in September.

Speaking at a government meeting with President Vladimir Putin, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Zhukov called the construction of two schools for 600 students each as well as an art school and a nursery school a "priority," the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

In addition, \$197 million will go toward building a hospital, while three new apartment blocks would be built to accommodate victims of the hostage-taking as well as teachers and social workers.

International space station: The U.S.-Russian crew of the international space station successfully re-docked a spaceship at a new port on the station Monday in preparation



Delaware River oil spill: Volunteers assist a worker with the Delaware County Animal Control to round up animals harmed by a crude oil spill on the river's bank in Essington, Pa. Divers found a six-foot gash in a cargo tank on the Greek-owned tanker that leaked 30,000 gallons of crude oil into the Delaware River, spokesmen for the Coast Guard and the vessel's owner said Sunday. The spill, the worst on the river in nearly a decade, stranded commercial vessels trying to move goods through the busy Port of Philadelphia, killed or injured hundreds of birds and angered residents along shoreline communities.

for two spacewalks early next year, Mission Control said.

Russian Salizhan Sharipov and American Leroy Chiao re-docked the Soyuz TMA-5 spaceship after a 23-minute flight from the Pirs docking port to the Zarya cargo module, Mission Control spokesman Valery Lyndin said.

Gaza withdrawal: Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was set on a collision course Monday with his most loyal coalition partner, the Shinui Party, raising prospects of early elections that could postpone an Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

Sharon has been walking a political tightrope since he lost his parliamentary majority several months ago, with hard-liners bolting over his plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and four West Bank settlements in 2005.

Sudan aid groups: Sudan ordered Monday the expulsion of the directors of two British-based humanitarian organizations, accusing them of sending "signals of support" to rebels in Darfur.

Sudan's Humanitarian Affairs Commission said the program directors of Save the Children UK and Oxfam International had violated the law on nonintervention in the country's political, ethnic or sectarian issues.

"[Y]ou must leave the country within 48 hours," the acting commissioner, Abdel Khaliq al-Husseini, said in letters addressed to the local directors of the aid organizations.

Victims of Pinochet regime: Chilean President Ricardo Lagos on Sunday said he planned to compensate thousands of people

who were imprisoned and tortured under the regime of Gen. Augusto Pinochet.

Lagos said he made up his mind after studying a gruesome report on torture during Pinochet's 1973-90 regime. The report was prepared by a commission that heard testimonies from 35,000 people.

Pinocchet's right-wing dictatorship fiercely suppressed leftists, dissidents and others perceived as opponents, imprisoning, exiling, torturing and killing thousands. Many of them simply disappeared.

Nuclear inspectors in South Korea: The U.N. nuclear watchdog will send a group of inspectors to South Korea next week for additional investigations into the country's past secret nuclear experiments, officials said Monday.

The inspection follows a decision Friday by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency not to refer South Korea's nuclear experiments to the U.N. Security Council. The IAEA's board of governors criticized South Korea for conducting plutonium and uranium experiments in 1982 and 2000 without reporting them to the agency.

EU fight over biotech food: European Union governments failed to break a deadlock Monday on whether to allow imports of a corn modified by U.S. biotech giant Monsanto Co. to resist rootworms, despite a ruling last month confirming its safety.

The committee has repeatedly deadlocked since the EU ended its six-year moratorium on accepting applications for new genetically modified foods in May. Such products remain controversial across Europe, where many see them as potential health and environmental risks.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

Correction

A headline accompanying a story in Saturday's paper about a demonstration at Naval Station Rota, Spain, was incorrect. Hundreds of workers blocked the main gate of the base to protest plans to cut the Spanish work force by 75 employees.

Check out the Travel
section in Thursday's
Stars and Stripes

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NCUA

U.S. military in Europe is flu free, so far

BY KEVIN DOUGHERTY

Stars and Stripes

There's good news on the flu front: The bug isn't going around. Not yet, anyway.

U.S. Army health officials in Europe said Monday that influenza activity is low, essentially, nonexistent.

With the U.S. European Command, "there have been no confirmed cases of influenza yet this year, and influenza-like illness is within normal limits and below last year's rates," according to a weekly summary issued by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine-Europe.

The summary, released Monday afternoon, also noted that influenza activity throughout the Department of Defense appears low.

"It's certainly encouraging ... that we haven't found much," said Maj. James Mancuso, the center's chief of epidemiology.

The good news comes at a time when health officials in Europe have, or are in the process of, receiving much-needed doses of the flu vaccine.

For the fourth time this month, a shipment of vaccines arrived Monday at the U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center, Europe, in Pirmasens, Germany.

A fifth shipment arrived in early October.

The plan has been to get these vaccines out to community hospitals and medical clinics for deploying troops and high-risk patients.

The latter group includes young children, pregnant women, senior citizens, folks with chronic medical conditions and health care providers, said Cynthia Vaughan, spokeswoman for European Army Regional Medical Command.

Medical materiel center personnel "are beginning to ship [doses of the vaccine] out to the clinics," Vaughan said.

"They should be there by next week."

In addition, the last of three shipments for the troops in Iraq and Kuwait arrived last week in Pirmasens.

Like the previous loads, the vaccines were moved south in short order.

"If they have not already received their flu shot, they will be getting it, too," Vaughan said of the troops stationed in the Middle East.

For force protection reasons, medical officials in Europe would not say how many doses have arrived in theater or the number flown to Iraq.

As of Monday, the medical command has received about 95 percent of the doses it requested earlier for deploying personnel and high-risk patients, Vaughan said.

There are "sufficient vaccinations to cover our high-risk beneficiaries and deploying soldiers and health care workers with direct patient contact," said Army Col. Ken Bradley, a preventive medicine consultant assigned to the command.

Bradley said people commonly confuse the flu with the common cold. While there are overlapping symptoms, the flu is characterized by high fever, respiratory infections, severe muscle aches and fatigue.

A cold just doesn't have the staying power of the flu.

The timing of the vaccine shipments couldn't have been better. The flu season in Europe typically doesn't reach a fever pitch until December or January, Bradley said.

The 2003-04 flu season was particularly difficult, according to Mancuso, with 54 confirmed cases of the illness, but the rates in Europe are still a fever itch until December or January, Bradley said.

In short, Bradley and other health officials said, if you're sick it's best to remain home, avoid close contact with healthy individuals, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, keep your hands clean and get plenty of rest.

In recent months, concerns over a possible flu epidemic have heightened because of a vaccine shortage.

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Pfc. Barnaby Johnson, 23, a medic at Forward Operating Base Wilson near Ad Dawr, Iraq, gives a flu shot to Spc. Claude Weathers, 22, of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment.

STEVE LIEWER
Stars and Stripes

In Iraq, flu shot plagued with delivery problems

BY STEVE LIEWER

Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq — The shortage of flu vaccine plaguing the United States and Europe is also causing trouble for some troops in north-central Iraq.

Doctors at the 67th Combat Support Hospital in Tikrit and one of its support units, the 429th Medical Evacuation Battalion, say they have far less than the amount of vaccine they need.

A sign on the door of the hospital tent at FOB Speicher warns patients there will be no more flu shots until further notice.

"There is a mad scramble for vaccine," said Lt. Col. Bobby Jones, the hospital's deputy commander for clinical services. "It's not plentiful. Not everyone has gotten it."

Maj. James Stein, chief of preventative medicine for the 1st Infantry Division, is less worried about his line troops. He said that 61 percent of the division's soldiers have received their shots, and he expects everyone will be immunized by Dec. 15.

"The troops in the theater obviously have priority," Stein said. "We're going to have enough, but the supply's a little thin."

Capt. Sharon Parker, a family nurse practitioner who is the 67th CSB's immunization coordinator, isn't sure her troops will fare as well. She said she requested 4,000 doses of flu vaccine, enough to cover 2,700 medical personnel plus some spare. The unit has been given 1,000 doses and isn't currently expecting to receive any more.

But medical officials in Baghdad said Monday the shots are on the way.

Lt. Col. Marc Caouette, Multi-National Corps-Iraq pharmacy consultant in Baghdad, said there is no shortage of vaccine for troops. He called the situation in Tikrit, "an isolated incident."

The 67th CSB wasn't supposed to give flu shots to everyone on base, Caouette said in a telephone

interview from Baghdad on Monday. Another unit has been given the mission of giving shots to troops in that region, but that unit hasn't been able to get to there yet, he said.

"We have [the vaccine]," he said, "but they didn't tell us that they were out. We actually shipped them 100 vials today."

Hospital officials in Iraq worry about medical personnel going through the winter unprotected since they are among the most likely soldiers to come into contact with sick people. Military bases can be incubators for disease. Some of the first cases of the 1918 Spanish influenza pandemic that killed millions of people around the world cropped up at U.S. Army posts where soldiers were training to fight in World War I.

"I'll just burn through a camp," Parker said.

Col. Edwin Moore, commander of the 429th Medical Evacuation Battalion — a Georgia-based Army Reserve unit operating at Speicher — is frustrated over the shortage.

"We were told [the vaccine] was ordered and everything was fine, but it wasn't," Moore said. "We do not have enough. We've been ordered to get 100 percent [of the unit's soldiers vaccinated], and we will. But we don't know how."

Caouette said the military has enough vaccine in Iraq to inoculate all troops. He estimated that 75 percent of troops have received the shot, and everyone should be inoculated by the end of next week.

So far, there have been no cases of flu reported in Iraq, Caouette said. But it's crucial that everyone get the shot, even though the military doesn't fall into the high-risk category.

"We're not considered high-risk," he said, "but it's a national defense risk if a unit comes down with the flu."

Sam Amrhein contributed to this report.

Sam Amrhein contributed to this report.
E-mail Steve Liewer at: liewers@mail.strips.esd.mil

Sailors in hard-to-fill jobs qualifying for big bucks to re-enlist

BY SCOTT SCHONAUER

Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION ROSA, Spain — The Navy is giving an early holiday gift to sailors in hard-to-fill jobs who re-enlist.

The Navy has released an updated list of bonuses for sailors in jobs that the service needs the most — the first revision of the Navy's Selective Reenlistment Bonus in more than a year.

Fifty-four job ratings and Navy Enlisted Classifications have been added to the list, according to Lt. Jim LeViness, a spokesman for the Navy Personnel Command in Millington, Tenn.

Fifty-five ratings have been dropped from the list and are no longer eligible for money. Nearly 200 job classifications are on the bonus list.

Nuclear-trained sailors can get the biggest bonus for re-enlisting.

Those with at least six years of service but no more than 10 can get as much as \$65,000. Sailors eligible for the Enlisted Supervisor Retention Pay can get even more — \$100,000 — if they meet the requirements.

The Enlisted Supervisor Retention Pay program is separate from the Selective Reenlistment Bonus and is designed to keep se-

Navy announcements on The Selective Re-enlistment Bonus and Enlisted Supervisor Retention Pay Program can be found at www.persnet.navy.mil

A Selective Reenlistment Bonus Calculator can be found at: www.staynavy.navy.mil

nior enlisted supervisors in critical jobs. Those who accept the supervisor bonus are not eligible for the Selective Re-enlistment Bonus.

Cryptologic technicians, hospital corpsmen and fire controlmen are also on the revised list. A sec-

ond-class petty officer trained as a cryptologic technician and with four years of service would get \$45,000 if he or she re-enlists for a six-year term. For three years, the bonus drops to a little more than \$31,000.

A third-class petty officer classified as a fire controlman and with three years of service would get more than \$40,000 for signing up for six years. He or she would get about \$19,000 for re-enlisting for three years.

The Selective Reenlistment Bonus is a program that helps the Navy keep sailors in job ratings or Navy Enlisted Classification codes that are difficult to fill. Sail-

ors must have served at least 21 months and be eligible to re-enlist in the Navy three or more years.

Sailor bonuses are calculated by a formula that includes such factors as time in service, pay grade and the length of the re-enlistment.

Award increases became effective Nov. 15 while decreased award levels will become effective Dec. 15, according to a Navy message.

Future Selective Reenlistment Bonus lists are to be adjusted more frequently so the Navy can continue to keep sailors in critical jobs, the message said.

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Gas, diesel fuel prices across Europe to rise

Netherlands personnel to see pump rates drop

By SANDRA JONTZ
Stars and Stripes

Gas prices are going up again. Increases kick in Wednesday, and those who can expect to pay more at the pumps include U.S. personnel and families living in Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom, Turkey and the Azores, officials said.

"Once again, the November (Department of Energy) average price for all grades of gasoline, including diesel, increased and is currently 43.6 cents a gallon higher than this time last year," according to information released Monday by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service.

Though the U.S. military services buy fuel from local suppliers, which is why prices can fluctuate from country to country, prices passed on to U.S. overseas users are based on U.S. prices.

As of Nov. 22, the average cost of gasoline in the United States was \$1.948 per gallon. Diesel was \$2.116 per gallon, according to the DOE's Energy Information Administration.

Overseas users of diesel fuel will take the greatest hit, with the average price increase of 8.2 cents per gallon. Generally, prices for regular gas will increase by 2.6 cents, mid-grade by 3.2 cents, and premium by 3.4 cents, AAFES reported.

In Germany, the AAFES price for normal unleaded fuel will be \$2.164 per gallon, AAFES reported. The price for super-unleaded fuel will be \$2.267 per gallon, super plus will be \$2.358 per gallon, and the price for diesel fuel will be \$2.333 per gallon.

Gasoline prices will decrease in the Netherlands, with super-unleaded fuel dropping from \$2.325 to \$2.167, and super-plus unleaded down from \$2.577 to \$2.519. Diesel fuel, however, will increase from \$2.503 to \$2.511 a gallon.

In the United Kingdom, AAFES gas customers will pay \$2.201 a gallon for super-unleaded fuel. Super plus and LRP no longer are available. Diesel fuel will increase to \$2.267, according to AAFES.

Troops and families in Turkey will pay \$2.096 per gallon for normal unleaded fuel, and prices for super-unleaded fuel will be \$2.340. Diesel fuel prices will remain the same at \$2.280.

AAFES operates 238 gas stations exclusively for military customers at installations in the United States, Europe and the Pacific.

For troops and dependents in Germany and the Netherlands, the gas coupons that expired on Sept. 30 still will be accepted at AAFES gas stations through April 30, even though they no longer are accepted of base.

Fuel prices in Italy are set by the Tax-Free Office through U.S. Navy contracts. Coupons are issued by the Navy Exchange for use on the economy because there are no gas pumps on any of the U.S. installations in Italy. The coupon fuel book prices will increase from \$63.55 per book to \$70.60 per book, a price change that is reflective of both the increase in fuel prices as well as the declining value of the U.S. dollar versus the euro, according to information in the NSA Naples base newspaper Navy and tax-free office personnel were not available for comment.

The Energy Information Administration posts average gasoline and diesel fuel prices on its Web site every Monday by close of business, EST. The Web site is: tonto.eia.doe.gov/oog/info/gdu/gas-diesel.asp

E-mail Sandra Jontz at: jontz@mail.esr.pent.mil

Maximizing gas mileage

Here are some tips to help drivers use fuel wisely:

- Drive sensibly. Aggressive driving, such as speeding, rapid acceleration and braking, can lower gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent in town.
- Observe speed limits. Gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph.
- Avoid excessive idling. Idling gets zero miles per gallon. Cars with larger engines typically waste more gas at idle than do cars with smaller engines.
- Use cruise control. Cruise control on the highway helps maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas.
- Keep engines properly tuned. A tuned car can improve gas mileage by an average of 4.1 percent, though results may vary. If a vehicle has a faulty oxygen sensor replaced, gas mileage may improve as much as 40 percent.
- Replace air filters regularly. Replacing a clogged air filter can improve a car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent.
- Keep tires properly inflated. Gas mileage can be improved by 3.3 percent by keeping tires inflated to the proper pressure. Under-inflated tires can lower gas mileage by 0.4 percent for every 1 pound-per-square-inch (psi) drop in pressure of all four tires.
- Use the recommended grade of motor oil. Gas mileage can be improved by 1 percent to 2 percent by using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil.

Source: Department of Energy

7 killed in Black Hawk crash

By NATALIE GOTT
The Associated Press

BRUCEVILLE-EDDY, Texas — An Army helicopter crashed and burned Monday after hitting a TV transmission tower wire in the fog, killing all seven soldiers aboard, military officials said.

Warning lights on the tower were not working, a TV station official said.

The UH-60 Black Hawk, bound for the Red River Army Depot in Texas, with seven soldiers from Fort Hood, went down in a field about 30 miles northeast of Fort Hood.

The fog was so thick when emergency crews arrived that they could not see more than half-way up the tower, authorities said.

Everyone aboard was killed, said Lt. Col. Jonathan Withington, spokesman for the 4th Infantry Division, based at Fort Hood. Their names were not immediately released.

The main part of the fuselage went down in a field about 200 to 300 yards from the tower, said McClennan County constable Ken Brown. He said he saw the tail section, parts of the rotor and other helicopter parts between the tower and the field.

Base spokesman Dan Hassett did not know what kind of mission the helicopter was on, but said the soldiers were attached to the 4th Infantry Division.

"Our hearts and condolences go out to the family and friends of these soldiers and we're going to do all we can to support the families in their time of grief," Withington said.

The helicopter hit a wire that stabilizes a 1,800-foot television broadcasting tower, said Jerry Pursley, general manager of Waco-Temple-Killeen television station KXXV, which owns the tower. The tower itself was not hit, he said.

Phone numbers at Darmstadt post to change

DARMSTADT, Germany — Phone number prefixes for DSN and commercial numbers on Nathan Hale Depot in Darmstadt are changing Thursday.

DSN numbers will change from the prefix 348 and the last four of the number to the prefix 344.

For commercial lines, it will change from 06151-69-XXXX to 06151-137-XXXX. Only numbers on Nathan Hale Depot in Darmstadt are affected by the number change.

Memorial Mass set for IMA-E employee

There will be a Mass at the Mark Twain Village Chapel in Heidelberg, Germany, at 12:05 p.m. on Friday for an Installation Management Agency-Europe employee who died Nov. 21.

Rich D. Hantsey, the IMA-E Region Liaison and Support Center director, died after complications from an illness, according to an Army news release. He was 58.

Hantsey, who was a veteran of the Vietnam War, worked for 32 years in Army libraries in Hawaii, the United States, Italy and Germany. Most recently, he worked to bring a library kiosk to troops in Iraq.

From staff reports



Petty Officer 1st Class David Burke, left, and Pasquale Lanzillo, firefighters with Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy, perform training out of the base's fire safety trailer in February. Naples and NAS Keflavik, Iceland, recently won the 2003 Life Safety Achievement Award.

JASON CHUDY
Stars and Stripes
file photo

Naples, Keflavik win fire safety awards

By JASON CHUDY
Stars and Stripes

Two U.S. Navy fire departments in Europe were recently named recipients of the 2003 Life Safety Achievement Award by the Residential Fire Safety Institute.

The fire departments at Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy, and Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland, were among more than 980 U.S. civilian and military recipients and were the only overseas recipients.

It is Keflavik's ninth consecutive Life Safety Achievement Award.

The awards program, in its 11th year, is designed to recognize local fire-prevention activities that contribute to reducing loss of life to residential fires.

Naples Fire Chief John Morris and Keflavik Fire Chief Sigurdur Arason said that their strong fire prevention programs have led to fewer fires on base, especially in housing areas.

According to the safety institute, residential fires account for about 20 percent of all fires, but result in about 80 percent of fire deaths.

Arason said that Keflavik's fire department tar-

gets its program in two main areas: base schools and annual in-home fire inspections for all of the base's 548 units.

"We go in the schools and talk to the children," he said. "We also go in every family home once a year. When we visit families we replace the batteries in the smoke detectors and talk to them (about fire prevention)."

Naples Fire Chief John Morris said that the base has a "robust fire prevention program," he said. "We're always trying to get the message out."

Morris said the department starts its fire prevention training with all new personnel in base indoctrination.

"We hit them in indoctr, and in ... fire prevention week," he said. "We touch a large percentage of our population through that."

Naples also has a fire escape training trailer in which children practice escaping from smoke-filled rooms.

In addition to both bases having large housing areas, each shares runways with civilian international airports. The Keflavik base, Arason said, provides all firefighting services for Keflavik's airport, which is the country's main international airport.

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4 U.S. troops killed in attacks; 1 dies in crash

Checkpoint attack kills 7 Iraqis; Allawi eases curfew in Baghdad

BY MAGGIE MICHAEL
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Two American soldiers were killed and three wounded in a roadside bomb explosion in northwestern Baghdad, the U.S. command said. The victims were members of the U.S. Army's Task Force Baghdad, which is in charge of security in the capital.

Two U.S. Marines were also killed in a weekend bombing south of the capital, a U.S. official said Monday. U.S., British and Iraqi forces have been sweeping through the area to clear Sunni insurgents from a string of towns and cities between Baghdad and the Shiite shrine cities of Najaf and Karbala.

Separately, the military said one U.S. soldier died and two were injured in a vehicle accident 30 miles northwest of the town of Kut in eastern Iraq.

Also Monday, a suicide bomber blew up a car Monday at a police checkpoint in western Iraq, killing seven government security force members and injuring nine in the latest strike against the country's fledgling police and National Guard troops, Iraqi officials said.

U.S. forces immediately sealed off the road after the insurgent attack against Iraqi security forces in Baghdad, 120 miles northwest of the capital, police Lt. Mohammed al-Fehdawi said.

A hospital official there, Hatim Ahmed, confirmed seven police and Iraqi National Guard members were killed and nine were wounded.

In other developments, Iraqi authorities announced an easing of the curfew in Baghdad imposed this month in the run-up to the U.S.-led offensive on the insurgent stronghold of Fallujah.

Effective Tuesday, the curfew will begin at 11 p.m. and end at 5 a.m., a statement from Prime Minister Ayad Allawi's office said.

Elsewhere, gunmen stormed a police station west of the city of Samarra late Sunday, a spokesman said. The attackers, who faced no opposition, looted the army and commandeered several police cars before leaving the area.

U.S. troops arrived at the station Monday morning and arrested two dozen people, the spokesman said.

In Basra, British and Iraqi

As of Sunday, at least 1,237 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 961 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is seven higher than the Defense Department's tally, which was last updated Wednesday at 10 a.m. EDT.

The British military has reported 74 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,099 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 852 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military: ■ A U.S. soldier died Sunday in a traffic accident north of Baghdad.

The latest identifications reported by the military: ■ No identifications reported.

troops were deployed around the headquarters of the Iraqi National Guard southern regional headquarters after the chief staff, Brig. Gen. Diaa al-Kadhimi, refused to accept an order from Baghdad to remove himself from his post, Iraqi officials said.

Al-Kadhimi was to have been replaced by the national guard chief in Amarah, Salah al-Malik. The standoff was continuing Monday afternoon.

South of Baghdad, U.S. and Iraqi forces launched raids Sunday that killed 17 suspected insurgents, Iraqi police said. The raids included a dawn speedboat assault by U.S. Marines and British and Iraqi troops on suspected insurgent hideouts along the Euphrates River, British media reported.

The speedboat assault was the biggest operation of its kind so far in Iraq, with 130 troops racing up the Euphrates in boats armed with machine guns and grenade launchers, according to the British reports.

However, the raid produced only a few small weapons caches and documents believed buried by a Saddam Hussein loyalist, British media said.

U.S. Marines, Iraqi commandos and British troops launched an offensive known as "Operation Plymouth Rock" in the area last Tuesday as a follow-up to the assault on Fallujah.

The British Embassy on Monday banned its staff from travel-

ing on the highway between Baghdad and the city's international airport due to a surge of attacks on the vital thoroughfare.

The travel warning issued by the British Foreign Office also urged Britons to defer even essential travel to Iraq due to deteriorating security. Previously, it advised against all but essential travel to Iraq.

Meanwhile, the governor of Iraq's Shiite-dominated Najaf province said Monday that police had arrested his own security chief after uncovering an alleged plot to assassinate top regional officials — including the governor himself.

The aide, Ali al-Sheibani, was detained late Sunday, Gov. Adnan al-Zurfi told reporters.

Iranian students protest U.S. occupation of Fallujah



Iranians chant slogans Monday as they surround burning British, American and Israeli flags in front of the British Embassy in Tehran. About 200 Iranian hard-line students were protesting the U.S.-led occupation of Fallujah, Iraq.

Iran offers to train Iraqi police and border guards

The Associated Press

TEHRAN — Iran offered to train Iraqi police and border guards two days before it was scheduled to host a meeting of security chiefs from Iraq's neighboring states, the official news agency reported Sunday.

It was unclear how Iraq would respond to the Iranian offer. The countries fought a war from 1980-88.

"The Islamic Republic is ready to train Iraqi police and border guards and even equip them as well as help with the country's reconstruction," said Ali Asghar Ahmadi, Iran's deputy Interior Minister for Security Affairs, according to the Islamic Republic News Agency.

Egypt and Jordan also have offered to train Iraqi security personnel and technocrats. Iraqi officials have criticized Iran for leaving its long borders with Iraq open to insurgents. Iraqi Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan had said Iran was his country's "first enemy" because it provided guns to insurgents. The United States has demanded that Iran do more to stop foreign fighters from crossing into Iraq.

Ahmadi was to attend the two-day meeting of interior ministers of Iraq's neighbors plus Egypt. The conference of ministers from Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Egypt was scheduled to begin Tuesday.

Al-Qaida No. 2 vows to keep fighting U.S. in new video tape

BY SALAH NASRAWI

The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — Osama bin Laden's top deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, said in a videotape aired Monday — but apparently taped before the U.S. presidential election — that there was no difference between the two candidates. He also vowed to keep fighting the United States until Washington changed its policies.

In a brief excerpt broadcast on Al-Jazeera television, al-Zawahiri said: "As for elections in America, the two candidates are competing to win the satisfaction of Israel," saying that fact proved "there will be no solution with America without forcing it to surrender to justice."

President Bush won re-election over Democratic nominee Sen. John Kerry in the Nov. 2 election. In the tape, al-Zawahiri said: "The results of the elections do not matter for us. Vote whoever you want, Bush, Kerry or the devil himself. This does not concern us. What concerns us is to purge our land from the aggressors."

Days before the election, bin Laden said in similar video footage that the United States must stop threatening the security of Muslims if it wants to avoid "another Manhattan" — referring to

the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. Addressing the American people, bin Laden also said, "Your security is not in the hands of Kerry, Bush or al-Qaida. Your security is in your own hands.... Any state that does not meet with our security has naturally guaranteed its own security."

It was unclear if Al-Jazeera planned to show more of the latest al-Zawahiri tape.

In the segment broadcast, al-Zawahiri also offered

the American people what he called "one last advice," adding, "I am sure that they will not heed it."

"You have to choose between one of two methods to deal with Muslims: either on mutual respect and exchange of interests, or to deal with them as if they are spoils of war," al-Zawahiri said.

"This is your problem and you have to choose yourself. You have to realize that we are a nation of patience and endurance. We will stand firm to fight you with God's help until doomsday."



al-Zawahiri

1st ID breaks ground on new HQ in Iraq

Unit to move from Saddam's palace in Tikrit to \$6.7 million facility south of Camp Speicher

BY STEVE LIEWER
Stars and Stripes

TIKRIT, Iraq — The 1st Infantry Division has broken ground on a new headquarters building that soon should allow the Army to abandon Saddam Hussein's magnificent and grotesque palace complex in Tikrit.

The \$6.7 million, 60,000-square-foot building is being built south of Tikrit at Forward Operating Base Speicher, a sprawling former Iraqi air force base. It is expected to open in April, said Lt. Col. Keith Stedd, the division's logistics officer, short-

ly after the division turns over control of its sector of Iraq to the 42nd Infantry Division.

The building will be home to the task force commander — currently, Maj. Gen. John Batiste — and his staff. Batiste's 22,000-soldier Task Force Danger patrols an area the size of West Virginia that is north and east of Baghdad, from 27 forward operating bases.

Lt. Col. John M. Larson, design engineer of the Wisconsin National Guard's 264th Engineer Battalion, which is supervising the project, said those bases will be returned to Iraqi control over time. The soldiers at those bases would move to Speicher, which is being planned as a longer-term home for troops in the region.

Currently about 6,000 officers and soldiers live at Speicher, Larson said. About 2,000 live at the division headquarters.

To accommodate future troops, Larson said, the division has requested another \$80 million from the Multi-National Coalition-Iraq military command in Baghdad. That money would build headquarters buildings, soldier barracks, communications and maintenance buildings for each of the task force's battalions. It's not clear yet if that money will be granted.

"Getting out of a place is not cheap," Larson said.

The current headquarters, which 1st ID calls Forward Operating Base Danger, is in Saddam's hometown complex of some 40 extravagant palaces overlooking the Tigris River.

The complex includes about 1.3 million square feet of floor space in impressive pink-marble palaces — far more than the task force needs. Saddam built the palaces in the 1990s.

The buildings look impressive but aren't terribly useful. Much of the space is wast-



PHOTOS BY DINA WANDLER/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Saddam Hussein's former showpiece palace in Tikrit is now the headquarters of the U.S. Army's Task Force Danger. The 1st Infantry Division has begun building a new \$6.7 million headquarters at nearby Forward Operating Base Speicher so the palace complex can be turned over to the Iraqi government.

ed on giant atriums and hallways. Viewed up close, the woodwork is cheap and the workmanship poor. The plumbing system is so bad that the gold-fixture toilets can't be used.

"[Saddam] built things just to build them," said Larson, 53, of Superior, Wis., whose civilian job is with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "They weren't functional at all, and they were poorly constructed. But what a facade! From a distance, they look pretty nice."

Current and former members of Batiste's staff say the general never wanted to move into the palace complex, in part because of the discomfort over the U.S. occu-

pying forces living in the lavish homes of the former dictator.

But higher headquarters blocked any move until now, the staffers said. Despite the symbolism, the palaces worked well as a military headquarters because the walled compound is quite secure and the marble buildings well-fortified against the rockets and mortars that sometimes are aimed at it.

Stedd, 43, of Hickory, Okla., said the Tikrit palaces eventually will be turned over to the government of Salah Ad Din province, which is headquartered in Tikrit. Government officials toured the palaces for the first time in August.

Steve Liewer at: liewers@mail.estrines.osd.mil



The ornately covered back side of the palace overlooks the Tigris River.

Some groups struggle to send care packages to troops

BY DARRYL ENRIQUEZ
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

MILWAUKEE — As kindhearted and patriotic supporters of U.S. troops are learning, generosity has its price. The cost is about a buck a pound.

Business firms, hospitals, schools and police are among those who have experienced the sticker shock of sending packages to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

And, as in any mission, those who plan ahead tend to suffer the fewest casualties. Campaigns that have worked hard for cash donations to ship the gathered goods are reaching their goals, while others that lack money have become bogged down, with donated supplies sitting in storage.

Dennis Mehring, public information officer for the 440th Airlift Wing in Milwaukee, said he gets at least two calls daily from groups that have collected goods and want to know if the unit's cargo planes can haul their packages to the troops for free.

The Airlift Wing transports troops and supplies to bases throughout the world, including the Arabian war zones.

"There's not a lot we can do for them," he said. "Federal law does not allow us to take these goods overseas. It's considered unfair competition with civilian carriers. And we simply don't have the room in our



planes."

One effort that's managed to stay on top of its shipping costs is Marshall Towne Millwork of Brookfield, Wis., a maker of kitchen, bathroom and storage cabinets.

"If you're going to do a big drive, you'd better get cooperation from local businesses to handle shipping costs," said Victor Aiello, the firm's area sales manager. "There's a lot of support in the communi-

Waukesha Alderman Randy Radish sifts through boxes of food and personal items that will be shipped to Waukesha-based troops deployed overseas. He has gathered nearly 500 pounds of items and is hoping to get financial donations for shipping costs.

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL/KRT

ties for troops, and when word gets out about a drive, people are giving.

"However, the postage is significant — about a buck a pound. If organizers on the front end ask for cash for shipping, I'm confident there'd be a willing response," he said.

Aiello said the firm has already shipped thousands of pounds of goods to the war zones and recently participated in a large

drive for postage. Marshall Towne also helped Burlington High School in Racine County, Wis., with the expense of shipping donations to the war zones.

One effort in need of shipping help is the Treats for Troops Campaign organized by Waukesha, Wis., Alderman Randy Radish. During the past few weeks, the campaign has collected nearly 500 pounds of food, toiletries, medicine and clothing from the three barrels it has out, but donors have given only \$50 for shipping.

"It's become a concern about raising enough money to send this stuff," he said.

Radish and helpers intend to ask those attending the Waukesha Christmas Parade for money and additional goods. The packages would go to the two Waukesha-based units now in the Middle East.

"I have no idea what to expect the day of the parade, but I'll take whatever we can get," he said.

The Brookfield Police Department has periodically shipped packages to overseas troops this year, and it tries to be cautious in the amount it collects to prevent the packages from outpacing the money it has for shipping.

"Shipping is costly, but we're fortunate that we have veterans groups and business and city employees giving what they can," police Capt. Phil Horter said.

Fort Benning gears up for more troops

By ELLIOTT MINOR

The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ga. — With Fort Benning preparing for its largest troop expansion since the Vietnam War, barber Anthony Brock figures he'll be giving a lot more GI haircuts, or at least he'll have a steady stream of customers even when major units deploy for combat.



Barber Anthony Brock trims the hair of 2nd Lt. James Barclay on Wednesday in Columbus, Ga., near Fort Benning.

Nearly 6,000 new soldiers are set to move to the western Georgia Army post, which is already a major training center for recruits, airborne troops, infantry soldiers, officers and reservists preparing for combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Thousands more may come when the United States starts closing European bases and brings home 60,000 soldiers and families, officials say.

Fort Benning is already home to the 4,000-member 3rd Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division, which helped lead the charge into Iraq in 2003 and will return to the war zone in a couple of months.

Now the fort is slated to get a new group of 3,800 light-infantry soldiers who will be members of the 5th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. Another 1,600 soldiers will be added to handle the post's additional training responsibilities and to expand existing units.

Al-Sadr loyalists revitalized

By HAMZA HENDAWI

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Followers of radical Islamic cleric Muqtada al-Sadr are trying to re-energize support for him in the movement's stronghold in Baghdad's Sadr City by reaching out to its 2 million mainly Shiite residents with relief work, protection and spiritual counseling.

After two bloody revolts against U.S. forces this year, the "Sadrists" are back to what they do best — street politics — and they seem likely to cash in on the new energy and make a bid in the elections now scheduled for Jan. 30.

A truce reached in early October between militiamen loyal to al-Sadr and U.S. troops ended weeks of fighting in Sadr City, the sprawling Baghdad district where the Sadrist movement rose in the chaotic and lawless aftermath of Saddam Hussein's ouster 19 months ago.

But recently the Sadrists have begun turning their attention to the peaceful tasks that won them significant support among poor Shiites, the majority of the community that makes up about 60 percent of Iraq's estimated 26 million people.

Robed and turbaned clerics are back on the streets overseeing the work of al-Sadr's militia, known



A pedestrian makes his way through a muddy street in Baghdad's Sadr City on Friday. Followers of Muqtada al-Sadr are reviving the movement's stronghold in Sadr City, reaching out to the district's 2 million mainly Shiite residents with relief work, protection and spiritual counseling.

as the Imam al-Mahdi Army, as they organize lines at gasoline stations and heating fuel depots and protect government property.

The al-Mahdi Army's revival comes less than a year after the United States vowed to "capture or kill" al-Sadr and destroy his militia when it launched its first revolt in April after occupation authorities issued an arrest warrant against him for murdering a rival cleric.

Now, the murder charge has been all but forgotten and the cleric's movement is riding a popular wave, although al-Sadr himself has not been seen publicly in weeks.

At the movement's Sadr City office, hundreds of residents thronged a courtyard Sunday afternoon, waiting to see the clerics inside to seek their assistance or counsel.

On Friday, the movement's revived standing as Sadr City's

main force was evident when a series of announcements were made at the end of the weekly prayer, attended by some 10,000.

A girls' school was praised for making the Islamic dress code mandatory for its pupils and an appeal was made for others to follow suit. Holders of university degrees were asked to meet Saturday as a first step toward electing a Sadr City shura council.

With two months left before the January vote, al-Sadr's followers appear to be succeeding in rekindling the zeal their supporters felt about the movement a year ago. Some of it may have been lost because of the bloodshed that left hundreds, perhaps thousands, killed or wounded.

Leaders of the reinvigorated movement may choose to abandon negotiations to join the all-Shiite electoral ticket sponsored by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's top Shiite cleric.

Qasim Abdul-Zahra of The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Jordan sibling wants full Iraq deployment

The Associated Press

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. — Army Command Sgt. Maj. James R. Jordan has much in common with his younger brother, retired basketball star Michael Jordan. He loves his job, believes in helping his team and expects maximum effort from those around him.

And like his brother, James Jordan likes to leave on his own terms. He has asked to stay in the Army for a year beyond his mandatory retirement date so he can complete a full year-long deployment to Iraq with about 500 other members of the 33rd Signal Brigade.

"We are currently at war," Jordan said before the unit started shipping out Sunday. "We are doing things, and it requires leaders to do certain things. That's what I am, a leader."

Under normal conditions, the 47-year-old Jordan would wind down his Army career in the spring as he approached the

30-year mark, but he has no intention of getting on an airplane April 29 and coming home.

"That's not the way you want to end a 30-year career," Jordan told The Fayetteville Observer.

Jordan is a no-nonsense non-commissioned officer with a shaved head and a dry sense of humor. He stands 5-foot-7, while his younger brother is about 6-foot-6. As the senior enlisted soldier in the brigade of 2,450 soldiers, he has kept a low profile at Fort Bragg and avoided calling attention to his family connection.

"If you don't believe in selfless service, you are not going to make it in this business," said Jordan, the oldest person in the brigade.

"I've been doing this by myself for so long, being my own person, being my own soldier," he said. "I'm going to continue doing it the same way until the day I feel like I need to hang it up, not when they feel like I need to hang it up."

IN THE STATES

Patients seek exemption to federal pot ban

BY GINA HOLLAND
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court appeared hesitant Monday to endorse medical marijuana for patients who have a doctor's recommendation.

Justices are considering whether sick people in 11 states with medical marijuana laws can get around a federal ban on pot.

Paul Clement, the Bush administration's top court lawyer, noted that California allows people with chronic physical and mental health problems to smoke pot and said that potentially many people are subjecting themselves to health dangers.

"Smoked marijuana really doesn't have any future in medicine," he said.

Justice Stephen Breyer said supporters of marijuana for the ill should take their fight to federal drug regulators — before coming to the Supreme Court, and several justices repeatedly referred to America's drug addiction prob-

lems. Dozens of people, some with blankets, camped outside the high court to hear justices debate the issue. Groups such as the Drug Free America Foundation fear a government loss will undermine campaigns against addictive drugs.

The high court heard arguments in the case of Angel Raich, who tried dozens of prescription medicines to ease the pain of a brain tumor and other illnesses before she turned to pot.

Supporters of Raich and another ill woman who filed a lawsuit after her California home was raided by federal agents argue that people with the AIDS virus, cancer and other diseases should be able to grow and use marijuana.

Their attorney, Randy Barnett of Boston, told justices that his clients are law-abiding citizens who need marijuana to survive.

Marijuana may have some side effects, he said, but seriously sick people are willing to take the chance.

Besides California, nine other states allow people to use marijuana if their doctors agree: Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Maine, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Vermont and Washington. Arizona also has a law permitting marijuana prescriptions, but no active program.

The San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled against the government in a divided opinion that found federal prosecution of medical marijuana users is unconstitutional if the marijuana is not sold, transported across state lines or used for non-medical purposes.

Lawyers for Raich and Diane Monson contend the government has no justification for pursuing ill small-scale users. Raich, an Oakland, Calif., mother of two teenagers, has scoliosis, a brain tumor, chronic nausea and other illnesses. Monson, a 47-year-old accountant who lives near Oroyville, Calif., has degenerative spine disease and grows her own marijuana plants in her backyard.

Court won't hear gay union case

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday sidestepped a dispute over gay marriages, rejecting a challenge to the nation's only law sanctioning such unions.

Justices had been asked by conservative groups to overturn the year-old decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Court legalizing gay marriage. They declined, without comment.

In the past year, at least 3,000 gay Massachusetts couples have wed, although voters may have a chance in 2006 to change the state constitution to permit civil union benefits for same-sex couples, but not the institution of marriage.

Critics of the November 2003 ruling by the highest court in Massachusetts argue that it violated the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of a republican form

of government in each state. They lost at the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston.

Their attorney, Matthew Staver, said in a Supreme Court filing that the Constitution should "protect the citizens of Massachusetts from their own state supreme court's usurpation of power."

Federal courts, he said, should defend people's right "to live in a republican form of government free from tyranny, whether that comes at the barrel of a gun or by the decree of a court."

Merita Hopkins, a city attorney in Boston, had told justices in court papers that the people who filed the suit have not shown they suffered an injury and could not bring a challenge to the Supreme Court.

Massachusetts Attorney General Tom Reilly told justices that voters can overrule the Supreme Judicial Court by adopting a constitutional amendment.

NBC executive survives jet crash

2 killed; Ebersol's younger son presumed dead

BY JOHN MARSHALL
The Associated Press

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. — NBC Sports chairman Dick Ebersol and his college-age son emerged from the wreckage of a chartered jet after the plane crashed, but authorities said Monday his 14-year-old son was presumed dead in the wreckage.

The 18-seat aircraft with six people on board crashed Sunday morning at Montrose Regional Airport in southwest Colorado, not far from the Telluride Ski Area. Two crew members were killed.

The plane slid sideways into a road and the impact ripped the cockpit from the fuselage, and Ebersol's older son Charles heaved his 57-year-old father through the gap, a witness said.

Matt Elits, Montrose County chief deputy coroner, said Monday that a "complete and thorough search" revealed no sign of

the second son on the plane, Edward, anywhere around the crash site.

"We believe at this time that the boy has probably perished within the crash," Elits said. He said the search in the wreckage would get under way when federal crash investigators arrived later Monday.

A heavy snowstorm had eased up before the plane prepared to take off for South Bend, Ind., where Charles Ebersol is a senior at the University of Notre Dame. There was no immediate word if the weather was a factor in the crash.

The pilot and a flight attendant were killed, said Michael O'Connor, regional duty officer with the Federal Aviation Administration in Washington state.

Ebersol's wife of 23 years, "Kate and Allie" and "McMillan and Wife" star Susan Saint James, was not on the plane. The family lives in Connecticut.



An airplane carrying NBC Sports chairman Dick Ebersol burns after crashing on takeoff at Montrose Regional Airport on Sunday morning, in Montrose, Colo. One of Ebersol's sons, Charles, survived but another son, Teddy, is presumed dead, KUSA reported.

Drivers make their way along Interstate 70 during a snow storm in Vail Pass, Colo., on Sunday.

Winter storms pound Colo., central states

BY ROBERT WELLER
The Associated Press

DENVER — A snowstorm that pounded the Sierra Nevada and buried the central Rockies during the weekend delivered a snowy, icy mess across the central part of the nation Monday, closing schools and making highways slick.

More than 100 schools in Nebraska were closed or opened late.

Stranded motorists had to find places to stay for the night in some areas of the state after icy, snow-covered pavement prompted shut downs of sections of Interstate 80 for several hours Sunday.

"We were on a total sheet of ice," Jennifer Priest, manager of a motel in North Platte, Neb., said of her drive to work Sunday.

Snow was up to a foot deep Monday in western Nebraska. "It's still snowing and blowing a little, and it's just a mess," said Tina Schiltz, an employee at Mitten Truck Stop in Oakley, Kan.

The storm continued producing mostly light snow Monday from New Mexico across the central Plains to the Great Lakes.

Since late last week, the weather had been blamed for at least five traffic deaths in Nebraska, three in New Mexico and two in central California.

The system dumped nearly 3 feet of snow on parts of Colorado early Sunday before hitting the heavily populated Front Range with bitter cold, blustery wind and about a half-foot of snow.

Fifteen inches of snow fell in Wyoming during the weekend and hundreds of traffic accidents were reported.

California's Sierra Nevada got 18 inches during the weekend, slowing thousands of Thanksgiving weekend travelers crossing the mountain range.

On the east side of the Sierra, a combination of 6 inches of snow and an equipment malfunction delayed or canceled dozens of airline flights at Reno, Nev.

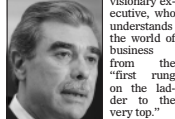
Bush picks Kellogg CEO as commerce secretary

BY DEB RIECHMANN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush on Monday chose Carlos Gutierrez, a native of Cuba who rose from truck driver to chief executive officer of Kellogg Co., to be secretary of commerce.

If confirmed by the Senate, Gutierrez would succeed Commerce Secretary Donald Evans. A Texas confidant of Bush, who announced his resignation shortly after the Nov. 2 election. The president called the 51-year-old Gut-

ierrez a "great American success story" and a



Gutierrez

visionary executive, who understands the world of business from the "first rung on the ladder to the very top."

Gutierrez, who was joined by his wife, son and two daughters, is

the first new member of Bush's economics team for his second term.

Bush's chief economics adviser, Stephen Friedman, announced last week that he is leaving. Other changes also are anticipated, although Treasury Secretary John Snow would like to stay.

"The secretary views his service to the president as an honor and a privilege," Rob Nichols, a Treasury Department spokesman, said of Snow. "Like all his Cabinet colleagues, he serves at the pleasure of the president."

Photos from the Front

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ABOVE Children at the Al-Alam Primary School in Tikrit, Iraq, receive school supplies from soldiers of Task Force 1-18 and the 201st Iraqi National Guard during a visit to the school earlier this month, courtesy of U.S. Army

LEFT Air Force Senior Airman Sean Barnette of the 376th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, pulls Sgt. Michael Nettles of the 68th Medical Company from a UH-60 Black Hawk during a training exercise simulating rescuing personnel from an aircraft fire at FOB Salerno.

CHERYL RANSFORD/U.S. Army



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Peterson appeals could take years

By DAVID KRAVETS
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The jury that convicted Scott Peterson of murder reconvenes this week to decide whether he should be executed, but the decision may not be final for years given his numerous options for appeal.

Appeals are expected to focus on the performance of Peterson's high-profile Los Angeles attorney, Mark Geragos, legal experts said.

"An appellate attorney would argue that Geragos was incompetent," said Pete Kosoris, a retired Ventura County death penalty prosecutor. "One of the things he can be criticized for was his promise of certain evidence in his opening statement, and he never offered it."

Geragos, as with others involved in the case, remains under a court-imposed gag order.

After a five-month trial that became a national sensation, Peterson was convicted Nov. 12 of first-degree murder in the death of his wife, Laci, and second-degree murder in the death of the fetus she carried. Arguments

begin Tuesday in the trial's penalty phase, in which the same jury will decide whether he should get the death penalty or life in prison without parole.

Geragos will not represent Peterson once he is sentenced. State-appointed, publicly funded lawyers will take over, a standard practice in California murder appeals.

The effectiveness of the defense is a bread-and-butter issue for appeal in capital cases, experts said.

In his opening statements to jurors in June, Geragos floated a series of explanations for the murders of Peterson's wife, Laci, and the fetus she carried. Among them was that transients who lived in the couple's neighborhood abducted Peterson's pregnant wife, then framed him.

Geragos never backed up his opening statements, which could have prejudiced jurors against his client.

Peterson's possible grounds for appeal also include the dismissal of two jurors during deliberations. One was ousted after performing her own research on the case; the reason for removing the other juror, who was the foreman



Scott Peterson, background, and attorney Mark Geragos listen during the prosecution rebuttal to the defense's closing arguments Nov. 3 in Redwood City, Calif.

of the panel, has not been disclosed.

Perhaps the most damning evidence against the 32-year-old former fertilizer salesman was the hundreds of secret recordings between Peterson and his mistress, Amber Frey, but defense attorneys could argue that the recordings were inflammatory and not relevant to the case.

The recordings portrayed Peterson as a liar and an unfaithful husband.

Prosecutors proposed a number of motives for the murder before finally asserting that Peterson killed his wife so he could live the life of a free-wheeling bachelor.

Jury selection for deadly human trafficking trial begins in Texas

By JUAN A. LOZANO
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Defendants in the first trial stemming from the nation's deadliest human smuggling attempt include the son of a South Texas couple accused of running one of the operation's cells.

Jury selection was set to begin Monday afternoon in federal court. Victor Jesus Rodriguez, Claudia Carrizales de Villa and Fredy Giovanni Garcia-Tobar each face a total of 58 counts of harboring and transporting illegal immigrants. If convicted, each could get up to life in prison.

Prosecutors say the three were part of a smuggling ring that tried to transport a group of more than 70 immigrants inside a tractor trailer during a trip from South Texas to Houston that began on the evening of May 13, 2003.

Packed inside the trailer, which had little ventilation, the immigrants began succumbing to stifling temperatures that authorities estimate reached 173 degrees.

Early the next morning, the trailer was abandoned at a truck stop near Victoria, about 100 miles southwest of Houston.

Authorities found 17 immigrants dead inside the trailer. Two others later died.

The victims, including a 5-year-old Mexican boy, died from dehydration, hyperthermia and suffocation.

Tyrone Williams, the Schenectady, N.Y., man who allegedly drove the truck that hauled the immigrants and later abandoned it, is set to go to trial Jan. 5. He is the only one of 14 defendants indicted in the case who could face the death penalty if convicted.

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Retailers unimpressed by weekend sales

BY ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The start of the holiday season was respectable but unimpressive for many of the leading U.S. retailers, with consumers jamming stores and malls on Friday and pulling back as the weekend wore on.

Big chains including J.C. Penney Co. Inc. and Sears, Roebuck and Co. were pleased with their sales. But Wal-Mart Stores Inc. was less fortunate — the industry leader said its sales in the seven days that ended Friday were disappointing, and the company low-

Shoppers stay away after Friday's holiday rush

ered its sales forecasts for November.

"Friday overall was strong, but Saturday was weak and disappointing, so together it was only a modest two-day performance," said Michael P. Niemira, chief economist at International Council of Shopping Centers. "Still, I continue to believe that this is not a bellwether for how the season will end up."

Wally Brewster, spokesman at Chicago-based General Growth

Properties, which operates 224 malls in 44 states, said sales and traffic were strong on Friday, but "stabilized" the rest of the weekend. As a result, he expects sales for the weekend to increase in the low single digits, in line with modest expectations.

Wal-Mart's holiday weekend sales suffered because it didn't offer the deep discounts it did in past years, hoping to boost profits, analysts said. Penney and Sears did better by wooing cus-

tomers with two days of big price breaks.

"Wal-Mart was a big loser because they didn't get the same numbers of early bird shoppers as they did a year ago," said C. Britt Beemer, chairman of America's Research Group, based in Charleston, S.C. "The retailers that won this weekend were the ones that were super aggressive in special purchases and special pricing."

Wal-Mart said Saturday it now

expects same-store sales in November to be up only 0.7 percent, instead of the projected 2 percent to 4 percent.

Without any must-haves in apparel and toys, the main attractions were electronics, particularly flat-screen TVs and DVD players, benefiting stores like Best Buy Co. Inc. and Circuit City Stores Inc. Marshall Cohen, senior industry analyst at NPD Group Inc., a market research company in Port Washington, N.Y., suspects that many mall-based apparel retailers "took it on the chin."

Total retail sales were up 10.8 percent on Friday compared with the day after Thanksgiving last year, ShopperTrak said. It expects to release Saturday's results on Monday.

Consumers were clearly hunting for good deals.

The first weekend of the season, while important, is not as critical as the last 10 days before Christmas.

So, despite the lackluster start, Niemira still forecasts a sales gain of 3 percent to 4 percent for holiday period.

'12 Days of Christmas' cost \$66,334

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Forget the birds, trees, jewelry, laborers and performers. How about a new Jaguar or Mercedes Benz, or a 1949 Rolex? The luxury cars and vintage watch would cost as much as all the gifts listed in the Christmas carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas," according to PNC Financial Services Group Inc.

Each year, the Pittsburgh-based bank does a tally of how much the drummers drumming, pipers piping, golden rings, turtle doves and French hens would set you back if you bought them for your true love at today's prices. The bank began publishing the list in 1982 for institutional clients and released it publicly the next year.

This year, the price for all the gifts — if they were bought repeatedly on each day as the song suggests — hit \$66,334, up from \$65,264 last year.

Buying each item just once would cost \$17,279. That's still enough for a Mini Cooper or a baseball signed by Babe Ruth.

This year, the nine ladies dancing would hit your wallet the hardest — coming in at \$4,400 — while the eight maids-a-milking are a bargain at \$41.20.

"The abundance of cheaper labor in countries such as India and China has resulted in pressure on U.S. manufacturers to outsource unskilled labor," said Jeff Kleintop, chief investment strategist for PNC Advisors. "As a result, the cost of skilled dancers has steadily increased, while the unskilled milk maids haven't managed an increase in pay for many years."

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Orange-Glazed Cornish Hens

Prep: 10 min.	Cook: 1 hr. 10 min.	Servings: 4
4 Tastybird® Rock Cornish Game Hens, thawed	1/2 cup frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed	
1 teaspoon salt	1/4 cup ketchup	
1/4 teaspoon pepper	1/4 cup honey	

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Wash hands. Sprinkle hens with salt and pepper; place in oiled roasting pan. Wash hands.

2. Roast hens 30 minutes. Combine orange juice concentrate, ketchup and honey. Baste hens with glaze. Roast, basting every 10 minutes, 40 minutes longer or until hens are done (internal temp 180°F). Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

SERVING SUGGESTION: Serve with buttered potatoes and asparagus. Refrigerate leftovers.

Guard helps Santa visit Alaska

BY RACHEL D'ORO

The Associated Press

VENETIE, Alaska — There's not a reindeer in sight, but out here in interior Alaska, six dogs hitched to a sled will do when the jolly round man in a red suit comes to call.

Santa descended from the C-130 transport plane and away they mushed, down a winding trail to the Venetie village school — 150 miles north of Fairbanks — where children and their parents sat on bleachers, whispering and watching the gymnasium door.

As he has for almost five decades, Santa and his helpers will have dropped in on 18 remote villages across the state before mid-December, bringing heaps of donated toys, books, school supplies and goody bags filled with fresh fruit, bottled water, toothbrushes and pencils, courtesy of the Alaska National Guard.

"The kids are really excited, especially with Santa coming in on a dog team like that," village chief Dennis Erick said as the Air Force Band of the Pacific played a snappy "Jingle Bell Rock."

Venetie, a largely Neets'ati Gwich'in community of 300, was among the first on the list this year. The Guard chooses different villages each year, including St. Lawrence Island and Little Diomed Island, a tiny dot just east of the Russian boundary.

"Little Diomed is so remote and they live such a tough life on that rock, it's the least we can do," said Maj. Mike Haller, who joined the project in 1986. "We also pay attention to places that have experienced fires, floods and other disasters."

Venetie was threatened by a 404,000-acre wildfire last summer that came within three miles of the village, pushing heavy smoke over the region. Another year, the Yukon River village of Koyukuk was singled out after severe flooding.

The Santa tour was born out of such disaster. In 1956, floods and a drought ruined the hunting and fishing season for residents in the western village of St. Marys.

With only enough money to pay to have food shipped in and nothing left over for Christmas, a Roman Catholic mission in the village got involved, Haller said.

The mission's mother superior wrote a letter to the National Guard asking for help. Word spread and, within days, the Guard was inundated with donations of new and used toys. It was only natural to call on Santa.

The mission closed in the late 1980s, but the gift-giving effort continued to grow.

"Now we have 300 volunteers working throughout the year collecting donations, organizing and cleaning them," Haller said.

So it takes a village to welcome Santa and his entourage. In Venetie practically everyone got involved. Some people showed up at the airstrip on snowmobiles to drive 45 Guardsmen and volunteer elves to the school a couple of miles away. The temperatures hovered around 20 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

Inside the heated gym, village-

ers set up an elaborate feast of moose-salad sandwiches, salmon macaroni, spaghetti, fresh fruit and chocolate cake.

Then came the moment the children had patiently awaited: sitting on Santa's lap. Some smiled shyly or stared at the floor. Others giggled as they told Santa what they wanted for Christmas.

Many children's wish lists were

decidedly high tech, leaning toward CD players and video games. The youngsters also asked Santa for puppies, stereos and snowmobiles.

"Some kids want guns. That's really important here in the bush," said Santa, a Guard member whose identity remains under wraps. "One girl said she wanted fun for Christmas. I told her that was my favorite thing."



An Alaska National Guardsman dressed as Santa Claus waves after arriving on an Alaska Air National Guard C-130 aircraft in the remote community of Venetie, Alaska, during Operation Santa Claus Nov. 19.



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Historian, philosopher share \$1M Kluge prize

By CARL HARTMAN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An 89-year-old American historian, Jacques Pelikan, and a 91-year-old French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, will share the \$1 million Kluge prize, created by a Virginia philanthropist last year to honor achievement in fields not covered by the Nobel prizes.

Pelikan, who lives in New Haven, Conn., has specialized in the story of Christianity from its beginnings to the present. He has written more than 30 books, using sources in nine languages and dealing with literary and musical as well as doctrinal aspects of religion. He is a former president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Ricoeur has taught at Haverford College in Pennsylvania, Columbia and Yale universities, the University of Chicago and Louvain University in Belgium, as well as at the Sorbonne and other French institutions.

Orphaned in World War I, Ricoeur was drafted in World War II and was captured and spent most of the conflict as a prisoner of war in Germany. He was active in the French Socialist Party afterward.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro	\$1.3605
British pound	\$1.94
Japanese yen (Nov. 30)	80.00
South Korean won (Nov. 30)	1,021.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.29460
British pound	\$1.94
Canada (dollar)	1.758
Denmark (krone)	5.29
Egypt (Pound)	0.215
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.7723
India (Rupee)	46.66
Iceland (Krona)	63.66
Israel (Shekel)	4.783
Japan (Yen)	109.00
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2946
Malaysia (Ringgit)	3.66
Philippines (Peso)	56.15
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3605
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3632
South Korea (Won)	1,021.00
Switzerland (Franc)	1.06
Thailand (Baht)	39.84
Turkey (Lira)	1,437.00000

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. Other currencies are based on the interbank rates provided for reference when checking with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when checking with your local military banking facility. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

PRECIOUS METALS

London close	
Gold	\$453.10
Silver	\$17.4

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.00
Discount rate	3.00
3-month bank rate	2.20
3-month bill	2.20
30-year mortgage	4.89

Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America

Harner's attorneys keep open mind

Lawyers pass 'no judgment,' say question is why shooting occurred

By ANGELA ROZAS
Chicago Tribune

CHICAGO — Attorneys for a man held in connection with the shooting death of six deer hunters in Wisconsin said Sunday the real question is not whether Chai Sosa Vang shot the hunters, but why.

"We certainly are making no judgments or jumping to any conclusions," said Steven Kohn at a news conference he and Vang's two other attorneys held in Milwaukee. "This certainly does not seem to be a who-dunnit — it seems to be a why-dunnit."

The attorneys would not comment on specifics in the case, including attorneys' reports that Vang told them he was called derogatory names and shot at before he returned fire, killing six and wounding two others in Wisconsin's north woods.

Vang, 36, a Hmong immigrant from Laos and a naturalized U.S. citizen, has been in police custody since the Nov. 21 incident. He is being held on \$2.5 million bail.

Vang is scheduled to appear at a hearing Tuesday.

Vang's eldest daughter, Kia Vang, spoke briefly to reporters, offering condolences to the other families.

"All of our families are facing hardships at this time. And we all have questions that, you know, need answers," she said. She said she was shocked to hear of the incident, and considers her father a great man.

Vang is being represented by a relatively high-profile legal team.

Kohn, the lead attorney, represented Christopher Scarver, who pleaded guilty to killing serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer in 1995.

Kohn's partner, Jonathan Smith, represented former Green Bay Packers Mark Chmura, who was acquitted in 2001 of sexually assaulting a teenager. James Mentkowski, Vang's third attorney, has represented Hmong clients and a Hmong community group in the past, he said.

Vang was a valued member of the Hmong community, Mentkowski said.

"Mr. Vang was loved and respected in his community — as all the other individuals that were involved in this incident," he said.

"There are many questions within the Hmong community as to how an individual as respected and loved as Mr. Vang... found himself in a situation that caused him to respond the way that he did."

Authorities have said Vang told them that he fired at a group of Rice Lake hunters, some of them unarmed, after they hurled racial epithets at him and shot at him, missing him, after he was told to leave a deer-hunting stand on private property.

But witnesses said Vang fired at them without cause after they told him they were going to report him for trespassing.

The attorneys said they have not seen police reports related to the case, and they do not know what kind of defense they may propose.

But they said they will examine the factual basis of the state's case, as well as Vang's "mental health and mental responsibilities."

Pilot credits survival in Alaskan wilderness to equipment, skills

By MATT VOLZ
The Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Last week, Michael Holman landed his plane on a deserted part of the Koyukotik Bay shore, hoping to do a little beachcombing.

Instead, the 45-year-old pilot got a six-day test of his survival skills in Alaska's wilderness when the incoming tide destroyed his plane, stranding him at the tip of the Kenai Peninsula.

He was found unhurt Sunday beside a campfire that ultimately chafed rescuers in on his location. Searchers had been scanning the shorelines for the Palmer resident since last Monday when he failed to arrive in Seldovia.

Planked by his wife Nicki and two children — 12-year-old Charlie and 9-year-old Laura — Holman recounted his ordeal Monday.

ments after arriving by rescue helicopter to Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage.

"I've got visions of cheeseburgers," he said.

Holman said he spent the first three days on the beach waiting for a rescue plane. He had salvaged food, a tent, a gun and other supplies from his blue and white Maule ML-7 before the water swallowed it. One item he forgot, though, was his emergency locator beacon.

Holman said his main priority was keeping warm and dry.

After three days of waiting, he decided that nobody was going to find him where he was and so moved on. Holman left his tent and most of his supplies, carrying just two cans of sardines with him for food.

Holman said he trekked across rough terrain from 4 a.m. until 9



Michael Holman, 45, center, of Palmer, Alaska, is greeted by his family Sunday on his arrival at Kulis Air National Guard base in Anchorage. Holman was missing for six days in the Alaska wilderness.

p.m. Friday, stopping in the darkness when he came upon an empty lodge. There he found water, a better map, a bag of rice and most importantly, a handheld radio.

The Civil Air Patrol and others battled winds, snow, rain and fog that decreased visibility, focusing on a 4,000-square-mile area over the Kenai Peninsula.

A Coast Guard crew picked up Holman's message on Saturday and was able to spot him with the help of a bonfire he set, but wind gusts prevented a helicopter rescue that night.

Holman said because he was so well-equipped, he never left his fears get the best of him.

"Actually, I've got to be honest and say I never reached desperation stage," Holman said. "That doesn't negate the absolute joy I felt at seeing the helicopter this morning."

Early Sunday morning, Holman made his way to a nearby beach, where Air National Guard rescuers picked him up, returned to his original landing site for the

rest of his gear, and flew him to Anchorage.

His family was waiting for him when the helicopter landed. His children, 12-year-old Charlie and 9-year-old Laura, ran to hug him as he stepped onto the icy tarmac. His wife followed, and the family stood in an embrace for several minutes before Holman was led away to recount the story to Alaska State Troopers.

Nicki Holman said the past week had been an emotional roller coaster. Searchers first believed they spotted a patch of ice on Turnagain Arm where the plane may have gone through, but a later search showed Holman had not landed there.

Nicki Holman then sat by the phone as crews searched through the short Alaska days battling snow, rain and wind gusts of up to 80 miles per hour.

"The nights were so long and the days were so short when I knew they were out searching for him. I wasn't perhaps confident anymore as some of those guys at the rescue center," she said. "I was starting to give up hope."

IN THE WORLD

Ukraine's high court hears election appeal

BY NATASHA LISOVA

The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — Ukraine's Supreme Court discussed the validity of the presidential election results Monday, while an eastern province scheduled a referendum on autonomy and the opposition threatened to further paralyze the government through a blockade.

Outgoing President Leonid Kuchma said "we cannot in any instance allow the disintegration or division of Ukraine," the Interfax news agency reported. Fears of a split rose after Ukraine's giant industrial base, the eastern Donetsk region, scheduled a referendum on autonomy for Sunday.

Speaking at a meeting of eastern Ukraine officials, Kuchma said he believed neither opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko nor Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich "wants to be president of one part of Ukraine."

The Supreme Court was considering an appeal by Yushchenko against official results of the Nov. 21 presidential runoff, which declared Yanukovich the winner. Yushchenko claims he was robbed of victory.

Under Ukrainian legislation, the court cannot rule on the overall results but can declare results invalid in individual precincts. Mykola Katerinchuk, a Yushchenko aide, said the appeal focused on results in eight eastern and southern Ukrainian regions — more than 15 million votes, almost half of the total cast in the runoff.

The opposition claimed "severe violations of Ukrainian legislation" and asked the court to annul the results, he said. It is also asking the court to name Yushchenko the winner because he narrowly won the election's first round on Oct. 31.

Justice Anatoly Yarema said the court would give Yanukovich's lawyers until 10 a.m. Tuesday to study the additional evidence presented by Yushchenko's team.



Representatives of opposition presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko view documents Monday in Kiev as Ukraine's Supreme Court heard discussing the validity of the contested results of last week's runoff election.

Stepan Havrysh, a key aide of Yanukovich, said his side was expecting a "fair decision ... taken without emotion."

"I expect that the judges will not reverse the law because it could end in a civil war," he said.

The ruling could pave the way for a new vote, which the opposition is demanding, or remove the only barrier to the inauguration of Yanukovich, who has the backing of Kuchma and the Kremlin — which still yields significant political and economic influence over energy-dependent Ukraine. Yanukovich was declared the winner with a margin of 871,402 votes.

Yanukovich said he would support a revote if allegations of fraud in the election are proven — but he said he had yet to see such proof.

"If there is evidence of falsification, I will agree with" a decision to hold a new vote, he said, adding that he would call on residents of his giant support base in eastern Ukraine to participate. But Yanukovich warned that evidence of fraud must be proved first through a "clear, honest and transparent" investigation, and suggested that such a revote would be illegal.

While the Supreme Court's decision is likely to boost the legitimacy of whichever side it seems to favor, it could also fuel anger in the other camp. Thousands of pro-Yushchenko and pro-Yanukovich supporters massed outside the court at the start of the session, but by midafternoon, most pro-Yanukovich supporters had left.

Ukrainians hold demonstrations across Europe

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — Swept up in a sea of orange, the color of Ukraine's embattled opposition, Maryana Yarmolenko held what thousands of people from her homeland have been doing for days across Europe — she marched to demand democracy.

"It's a historical moment for our country, and people want to be a part of it," Yarmolenko, a 23-year-old law student, said Sunday as several hundred Ukrainians held a rally in downtown Vienna, their fifth here in less than a week.

From Paris to Prague, Ukrainians living around Europe are pulling together to stage small but spirited protests demanding a quick and peaceful resolution to the former Soviet republic's political crisis.

In Rome on Sunday, Pope John Paul II — a fellow Slav — said during his weekly address that his thoughts were with the Ukrainians present at St. Peter's Square. "I assure them of my prayers for peace in their country," the pope said.

About 300 demonstrators, many wearing orange scarves or carrying orange umbrellas and singing Ukraine's national anthem, rallied in London's Holland Park on Sunday in support of Yushchenko.

"I want a re-election for the people — not this false election," said Milla Smith, 49, a Ukrainian who lives in Rayleigh, east of London.

Ex-premier: Spain's reaction to bombing was reasonable

BY ED McCULLOUGH

The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — Former Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar defended his government's response to the Madrid train bombings in testimony Monday before skeptical lawmakers investigating the attack.

"I have been accused of being eager to blame the massacre on the terrorist gang ETA. If this were the case, one must admit that others beat me to it," Aznar said.

The local government of Spain's northern Basque region had also immediately blamed ETA and so had officials of the Socialist Party — then in opposition and now in government.

The toll in Spain's worst terrorist attack was 191 dead and more than 1,800 injured.

Aznar was called to testify by center-left parties that allege his conservative Popular Party underes-

timated the threat of Islamic terrorism, and misled Spaniards by continuing to blame the Basque separatist group ETA for the March 11 commuter train bombings even after strong evidence — subsequently confirmed — of an Islamic link emerged.

Critics say the government's primary concern in insisting on the ETA angle was to salvage national elections three days later, amid fears that Islamic involvement in the attacks would be seen as revenge for Aznar's support of the Iraq war in the face of vehement opposition at home.

The hearings, to conclude Dec. 15, are to be followed by a report for presentation in parliament.

From The Associated Press

in the March 11 backpack bombings that targeted the Madrid commuter rail network, the newspaper ABC said, citing information from the FBI.

Last week, the United States announced a \$5 million reward for information leading to Setmarian's arrest, saying he was an al-Qaida operative who ran a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan.

Also known as Abu Musab al-Suri, he trained terrorists in poisons and chemicals, the State Department said.

From The Associated Press

U.N. approves deal with Iran on uranium freeze

BY GEORGE JAHN

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — The U.N. nuclear agency agreed Monday on ways to police Iran's suspension of some nuclear programs, but a U.S. official, branding Tehran a threat to world peace, said Washington might take the case to the Security Council.

In arguing for such a move, U.S. chief delegate Jackie Sanderson listed more than a dozen open questions about Iran's nuclear intentions still before the agency despite a nearly two-year investigation of almost two decades of covert activities.

"This makes it clear that the IAEA cannot ... offer the necessary assurances that Iran is not attempting to produce nuclear material for weapons," she told the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

She spoke shortly after the board passed a resolution authorizing IAEA head Mohamed ElBaradei to monitor Iran's commitment to freeze uranium enrichment activities that can produce either low-grade nuclear fuel or the raw material for atomic weapons.

The issue of suspension had dominated the meeting since the opening day on Thursday. Iran insisted on exempting some equipment, a demand that forced the meeting to reconvene on Monday after a weekend adjournment.

France, Germany and Britain, who negotiated a Nov. 7 agreement with Iran on suspension, came to the meeting saying the deal meant that all equipment used for enrichment must come to a standstill.

Iran had demanded that it be allowed to run 20 centrifuges for research purposes.

Seeking to avoid tough measures the board that could have led to referral to the Security Council and possible sanctions, Iran appeared to give up its demands Sunday, delivering a letter to the agency pledging "not to conduct any testing with these sets of components."

ElBaradei, the IAEA head, urged Iran to keep suspension in place as long as possible. That, he said, was needed "to mitigate the confidence deficit" in Iran, its record of past clandestine activities and continued reluctance to fully cooperate with an agency probe of its nuclear agenda.

Report links Sept. 11, train attacks

MADRID, Spain — An unidentified Muslim militant suspected of helping plan the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States also ordered this year's Madrid train bombings, a Spanish newspaper said Sunday, asserting the closest link between the two terrorist attacks.

The man is believed to be a lieutenant of Mustafa Setmarian, a fugitive with dual Syrian and Spanish nationality who is considered a key figure

Dalai Lama visits Russia

ELISTA, Russia — The Dalai Lama arrived Monday on his first visit to Buddhists in Russia after Moscow abruptly reversed its refusal to grant the Tibetan spiritual leader entry.

The Foreign Ministry had said the Dalai Lama would be given a visa in the expectation that he would limit his activities in Russia solely to pastoral purposes, visiting largely Buddhist communities in Kalmykia, in southern Russia.

Half the 300,000 residents of the region, roughly 1,000 miles southeast of Moscow, are Buddhists. In all, Russia is home to about 1 million Buddhists.

The Dalai Lama, who lives in exile in India, also leads Tibetans who resist Chinese rule. Russia, wary of upsetting China, has re-

jected visa requests for the Dalai Lama at least three times.

Quake rocks Japan

TOKYO — A powerful earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.1 struck Japan's northern island of Hokkaido early Monday, injuring 24 people, swaying buildings and triggering a small tsunami wave that reached the shore.

Damage from the 3:32 a.m. quake appeared to be limited to broken glass, cracks and at least one cave-in roof.

Japan's Meteorological Agency quickly issued a tsunami warning for the eastern shores of Hokkaido's Pacific coastal area. Tsunami are potentially dangerous waves triggered by seismic activity.

But agency official Masahiro

Yamamoto later said during a televised news conference that the warning had been lifted, saying it had detected a 4-inch tsunami and expected only small changes in the ocean's surface.

Aftershocks occurred throughout the day, including a 4.8-magnitude tremor Monday evening.

Stem cell research OK'd

GENEVA — Swiss voters overwhelmingly approved a law allowing stem cell research Sunday, rejecting a hard-line campaign that compared researchers to the Nazi "angel of death," Dr. Josef Mengele.

Some 66.4 percent of those polled — or 1.1 million voters — approved the law passed by the government last December. The law will take effect in March.

Opponents had called the refer-

endum to try to overturn the legislation, even though it sets stricter limitations on research than exist elsewhere in Europe. The Swiss bill allows the use only of embryonic stem cells left over from in-vitro fertilization.

The government said the law will permit Switzerland — which has major pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies — to take part in vital research.

The government stressed the restrictions on the research, which include a requirement for the written consent of the parents and the approval of an ethics committee and the Swiss Health Ministry for each research project.

European nations that permit stem cell research include Sweden, Finland, Greece and the Netherlands. Britain allows the creation of human embryos for stem cell procurement.

N. Ireland peace talks

LONDON — Sinn Féin, the Northern Ireland party that once headed the Irish Republican Army, met the province's police commander for the first time Monday as the pursuit of a new peace agreement faced a decisive vote.

Leaders of Sinn Féin — among them Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, both reputed chiefs of the outlawed Irish Republican Army — met Chief Constable Hugh Orde in the office of Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The British leader, who opened relations with Sinn Féin soon after taking office in 1997, has spent the past year trying to forge a power-sharing agreement between Sinn Féin and the Democratic Unionists, who represent most of Northern Ireland's British Protestant majority.

The Democratic Unionists say they won't work with Sinn Féin unless the IRA fully disarms and disbands. They insist that the next disarmament acts must be photographed and independently witnessed, details resisted by Sinn Féin.

Britain and Protestant leaders have been seeking IRA disarmament for the past decade.

Smoking ban in Bhutan

GAUHATI, India — The tiny Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan has gone to extremes to protect its pristine environment, its ancient culture and the well being of its citizens. The country's forests are strictly conserved. Television was banned until a few years ago. And only a few thousand tourists are allowed in each year.

Next month, this idiosyncratic Buddhist nation of 700,000, nicknamed Shangri-La, will become the first country in the world to ban all smoking in public and all sales of tobacco.

It will be illegal to buy tobacco, sell it or smoke anywhere in public. The fine for breaking the rules: \$225 — an enormous sum in an impoverished nation.

Individuals will be allowed to bring tobacco into the country for personal consumption, but only after paying 100 percent tax on the cost price. They can smoke it only at home.

Kinley Dorji, editor of Bhutan's Kuensel newspaper, said only about 1 percent of the population is thought to smoke.

Pakistan test missile

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan successfully test-fired a new version of its short-range, nuclear-capable missile Monday, officials said, in the latest round of tit-for-tat launches with neighboring India despite recent peace overtures.

Army spokesman Maj. Gen. Shaoukat Sultan insisted the test of the Ghaznavi missile will have no negative impact on the peace process with Pakistan's rival, India, which had no immediate comment on the launch.

President Gen. Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz congratulated scientists for giving Pakistan the missile and "making its defense impregnable," another military official said on the condition of anonymity.

He said more such tests will be carried out in the coming days.

From The Associated Press

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¹Based on total active duty officers compared to total number of active duty officers insured by USAA and its affiliated insurance companies as of 8/31/2004.

²Based on total noncommissioned officers compared to total number of noncommissioned officers insured by USAA and its affiliated insurance companies as of 8/31/2004.

*Mobile phone users in Germany: Dial 0800-225-288, then 800-263-44030 when prompted. UHFN dialing is not available in Bosnia, Turkey, Kosovo, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain or Egypt. United Services Automobile Association, USAA Casualty Insurance Company and USAA General Indemnity Company are domiciled in the State of Texas and are licensed in all 50 United States and the District of Columbia. USAA County Mutual Insurance Company and USAA Texas Lloyd's Company are domiciled and licensed in the State of Texas. USAA Limited is domiciled and licensed in the United Kingdom and authorized under the Freedom of Services Directive in Azzores, Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Greece. Product availability may vary in some foreign locations due to local laws and restrictions. To determine availability of USAA products and services in a particular foreign location, call 00800-914-27790. ©2004 USAA. All rights reserved. A3701-09/04





Quick Trips

Simple Syracuse

Blend of past, present reveals the true Sicily

BY JASON CHUDY
Stars and Stripes

Sicily's Syracuse — Siracusa to the locals — is an ideal place for a quick trip, although the small city has more than enough for a not-so-quick trip.

With Greek and Roman ruins, a British military cemetery, an Irish pub, Chinese restaurants, an aquarium, forts, and breathtaking seaside views, Syracuse has enough to keep visitors busy. Or not so busy.

Located about an hour south of Naval Air Station Sigonella, Syracuse's eastern border faces the open Mediterranean.

Syracuse's sites are spread out through the city, which in Greek times (it was founded in about 733 B.C.) was about three times larger than it is now. While the majority of the ancient highlights are along the western edge of the current city, the best place to sample Syracuse is on the island of Ortigia, which is connected to the rest of Sicily by a few short bridges.

Ortigia is an island shaped like a human left hand with its index finger pointing up, or in this case south. Nearly bisecting the island is the town's main roads, Corso Matteotti, and then the narrow Via Roma, which takes over halfway down the island.

These two streets serve as the main arteries for a visit to the island and have dozens of smaller side streets branching off from them, all eventually leading visitors to the raised street along the outer edge of the island.

Ortigia has a good blend of tourist and non-tourist character to it. Many of the shops seem to cater to the locals rather than the tourists, and with the island being nearly walk-to-wall houses it's no wonder. Being November — not a heavy tourist month — may have also had something to do with it.

The obligatory Italian pottery is there, as are some shops that sell necklaces with dangly glass ornaments, and one that sells hand-painted silk. Many of the side streets also have galleries, shops or restaurants, and plenty of small hotels are available for those wanting to extend their quick trip.

The blend gives the island a feeling of being the true Sicily, not one solely dependent on the tourist trade.



PHOTOS BY JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

Warm, golden lights line buildings along Syracuse's Lungomare, or coastal road, as the sun sets behind the town.

On the western side of the town is a small aquarium, its neon blue sign beckoning from a narrow corner near the port headquarters. Along this side of town, which borders Porto Grande — the grand port — fishermen, lovers and dog walkers all take in the final few moments as the sun set over the Sicilian cliffs.

In the heart of Ortigia, along its well-lit streets, is the town's oldest structure, its cathedral. The Greek temple of Athena, which dated back to 5 B.C., was on this spot and during the 7th century was turned into a Christian church. The temple's original Doric columns are still in use inside the church.

Syracuse is also one of the most well-lit towns around, with bright lights mounted on the buildings giving the island a warming, golden glow even in the cool November evening.

As evening settled over the city, dogs and dog-walkers —



A fountain graces the plaza named for Archimedes, the ancient Greek mathematician who lived in Syracuse.

seemingly more per capita than anywhere else in the country — took over many of the side streets. Old men gesturing with cigarette-laden hands and women of all ages walking in and out of shops seemingly materialized out of the woodwork, although like all other Italian cities, Syracuse is mainly stone.

For those looking for the Greek and Roman history, the



Young lovers and fishermen take in the sunset over the Sicilian coast along Syracuse's Porta Grande, or grand port.



PETER JAEGER/Stars and Stripes

main part of town is where all the action is, or rather was.

Within the town's archaeological park are the Greek theater, Roman amphitheater, arches and tombs.

The archaeological museum, about a kilometer east of the park, was opened in 1988 and is considered one of the best in Sicily. More than 18,000 pieces from archaeological digs throughout the island are on display.

Whether they focus on Syracuse's past or present, the city provides visitors a quick and easy getaway from Sigonella.

E-mail Jason Chudy at: chudyj@mail.estripes.osd.mil

On the QT



Directions

From Sigonella, take Autostrada A19 toward Catania. Exit to the south Tangenziale, and then take the Siracusa/Ragusa exit about 5 kilometers down. Follow signs to Siracusa and take the main exit into the city and follow signs to Centro (center). In the city signs will guide you to Ortigia and the archaeological sites.



Times

The aquarium is open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; in summer to 8 p.m.

The archaeological park is open Tuesday through Sunday 9 a.m. to two hours before sunset.

The archaeological museum is open Mondays from 3:30 to 6 p.m. and Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3:30 to 6 p.m.



Costs

The aquarium costs 2.60 euros for adults and 1.60 euros for kids. Entrance to the archaeological park runs 4.50 euros.

The museum costs 4.50 euros for adults and 2 euros for kids. Three different combination tickets are available, and prices depend on which exhibits visitors want to see.

For the museum and the park, the ticket runs 6 euro.



Food

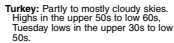
Syracuse has everything from up-scale, full service restaurants, to street-side vendors.



Information

The official regional Web site for Sicily, goes into detail about the exhibits and has photographs of some. It's at <http://www.regione.sicilia.it/benculturati/dibencult/musei/musei2/engorsi.htm>

Frommer's travel Web site lists free details for many of the town's sites: <http://www.frommers.com/destinations/syracuseandortigiailand/>



New moon First qtr. Full moon Last qtr.

Map of the Eastern U.S. showing high temperature zones and weather fronts. The map includes latitude and longitude markings (30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s; 100s, 90s, 80s, 70s, 60s, 50s, 40s, 30s). High (H) and Low (L) pressure systems are indicated. Weather fronts are shown with symbols for cold, warm, and stationary fronts. A legend at the bottom identifies the symbols for fronts and the shading patterns for temperature zones: 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80s.

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No Ho! Ho! Ho!

CA ANAHEIM — Santa Claus can build toys, shimmy down a chimney and harness flying reindeer. But one thing he can't do any more is skydive near Disneyland.

An annual "Jingle Bell Jump," with Santa parachuting to the Anaheim Town Square shopping center with gifts and greetings, was canceled for a second year because of a federal law restricting use of area airspace.

Instead, Santa will float in a hot air balloon tethered to the ground.

Disney officials say the flight restrictions are needed to thwart terrorists who could target the store. Managers of the 50-store shopping center don't buy it.

Cut textbook costs

GA ATLANTA — The state Board of Regents reviewed ways to curb the increasing costs of textbooks. Some students must pay hundreds of dollars for books that can make up 20 percent of the college costs, state financial officials said.

Textbook editions are updated about every four years, forcing many students to buy new books instead of cheaper used ones. "The cost has become prohibitive to an awful lot of people," Chancellor Tom Meredith said.

Truck crash kills 3

OK TAHLEQUAH — A car collided with a tractor-trailer carrying 11,000 pounds of frozen turkeys, killing three people, authorities said.

The victims were in the car, which drove through a stop sign around 6 p.m., according to the Oklahoma Highway Patrol.

Nobody in the truck was injured.

"There was nothing we could do about it," said Aaron Gower, a passenger in the truck. "It was like they didn't even know there was a stop sign."

Boy hit, killed by car

FL FLORAL CITY — Each school morning, Sean Ryan Sullivan's mother, Carmen, helped him get ready for the day.

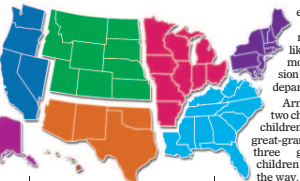
She made sure he was dressed and fed, homework in hand. Then she watched from the front screen door as her son headed for the nearby bus stop.

As her son ran the nearly 200 yards, she noticed the next-door neighbor pull her Pontiac sedan out of the driveway and make a wide turn onto the road.

Blinded by the sun, the neighbor drove across the center of the two-lane road and struck the 8-year-old as his mother watched.

Emergency crews flew Sean to a hospital, where he died a few hours later, authorities said.

"The family's torn up. (The neighbor) is pretty torn up," said Mark Turner, the boy's uncle. "He was very outgoing, a boisterous and fun-loving kid."



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

The Florida Highway Patrol is investigating, but no charges have been filed, a spokesman said.

Beyond retirement

MO KANSAS CITY — Missouri's oldest full-time state employee figures she's got 10 more years to go before it's time to retire. By then, her age will be in triple digits and she can "take four or five years off and party."

Virginia Ann, who just turned 90, said her job at the Division of Motor Vehicle and Drivers Licensing is "heaven."

"I love the people. I have a lot of fun with them. People are always asking me how old I am, and I don't mind telling them," she said.

For the past 5 years, Ann has worked as a greeter at the DMV, helping people find the right line and making sure they have the correct paperwork. Office manager Dave Hostetler said she has the best attendance record in the office.

The job, combined with dancing at least four times a week, keeps her going.

"Just think about it, 90 years old and working with a smile

every day at the DMV, one place most people don't like to go," said Raymond Hune, division director for the department.

Ann, a widow, has two children, five grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren with another on the way.

'Not in L.A.'

CA LOS ANGELES — This just in: Los Angeles finally has something people in San Francisco want — money.

"We love people from Los Angeles, we love when they spend their money in our town. We love that!" says Diane DeRose, the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau executive behind "Not in L.A.," a new campaign to lure winter tourists to the City by the Bay. As the campaign's name implies, whatever you can't find in L.A. will be able to locate in San Francisco.

Links to the Not in L.A. Web site have been showing up in magazine ads, on coasters left in bars and on "mobile billboards" being moved around town. People who go to the site can find out more about places and landmarks such as Union Square, the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz Island, the Mission district and other parts of the city they may want to visit.

Andy Warhol Bridge

PA PITTSBURGH — Pittsburgh will soon be home to the Andy Warhol Bridge. The Allegheny County Council approved a resolution renaming Seventh Street Bridge in honor of the Pittsburgh native.

The bridge was chosen because of its proximity to The Andy Warhol Museum. Museum officials are considering holding a renaming ceremony in the spring.

Hefty bank error

VA SUFFOLK — When Mike Kainrath found an extra \$1.8 million in his bank account last week, he had just one thought: "Oh, no! Not again."

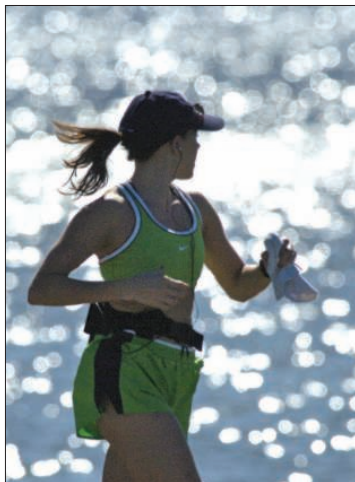
Kainrath had found an extra \$115,661 in the account in April 2003, and \$2,700 in November 2002.

According to the notice Kainrath received Nov. 17 from the Bank of New York, the money was supposed to have been transferred between a different bank in New York and one in the Netherlands Antilles.

Kevin Heine, a spokesman for the bank, said that sooner or later the error would have been caught when banks reconciled their transfers to each other.

Kainrath, a marketing research manager at The Virginian-Pilot newspaper in Norfolk, said he is going to make one change the next time he's in New York, just in case another huge sum lands in his account again, even for a few days.

"I'm going to change it to an interest-bearing account," he said.



Sunny outing

Kristin Fitzgerald jogs against the backdrop of reflections shimmering off the water of University Lake, taking advantage of a crisp, sunny weather in Baton Rouge, La.



Fun with family

Emily Kinder, 13, left, tries to intercept a pass intended for her cousin, James Abila, 12, in Salina, Kan. The children and their relatives decided to play football so they could get some post-Thanksgiving exercise.



Santa's little cyclist

Wearing a sweater lined with Christmas lights, Kelly Foley, of Wrightwood, Calif., rides her bike past a decorated float in the Wrightwood Parade of Lights. The event featured motorized vehicles lit up with holiday lights and decorations.



Lighting the season

Musicians participate in the Kansas City, Mo., tree-lighting ceremony at Crown Center Square. Kansas City Mayor Kay Barnes and singer Marilyn Maye flipped the switch to turn on 7,200 white lights on the city's Christmas tree.



A colorful discovery From left: Aly Whalen, Catie Gruenwald, and Mackenzie Jenkins, all 10-year-olds from Epiphany Grade School, follow colored circles of light at the Color Dance exhibit on the third floor of the Children's Discovery Museum, in Normal, Ill., after the museum's ribbon-cutting ceremony in downtown Normal.



Riding the dunes Off-road drivers navigate the sand dunes at Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area near Glamis, Calif.



Taking a break A Louisiana heron rest on a rusty gas tank sunk in a duckweed filled pond near Bayou Grand Caillou in Dulac, La.

Gay pride shirt lawsuit

MO KANSAS CITY — The American Civil Liberties Union sued a southwest Missouri school district for prohibiting a high school student from wearing gay-pride-themed T-shirts.

The district has said the T-shirts were disruptive and therefore a violation of school dress code. The lawsuit filed in federal court also names Webb City High School Principal Stephen P. Gollhofer.

"Because I'm gay, my school is trying to take away my constitutional right as an American to express myself," the student, Brad Mathewson, said in a statement.

"The school lets other students wear anti-gay T-shirts, and I understand that they have a right to do that," he said.

The 16-year-old junior started attending the high school this year. On Oct. 20, he came to class wearing a shirt from the Gay-Straight Alliance at his former high school in Fayetteville, Ark.

Snail may harm crop

TX HOUSTON — Agriculture officials are worried that a non-native snail the size of a fist may grow to threaten the Texas rice crop.

Authorities have discovered the channeled applanal bodies of water in Southeast Texas, including the Chambers County Golf Course pond.

"So far, these snails have not infested areas sufficiently in Texas to cause damage," Lyubov Burlakova, an adjunct biology professor at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, said in Friday's editions of the Houston Chronicle.

Because of the discovery, research scientists, including Burlakova, started a study this month of the snail's lifestyle and to project its potential danger to rice crops and aquatic habitat in Texas.

Missing man's body found

ND HETTINGER — A gun and a human remains thought to be those of an elderly man with Alzheimer's were found in an abandoned building where the body of his wife was discovered earlier this month.

The remains were found in the attic of the derelict house, Adams County Sheriff Eugene Molbert said. Searchers who previously had looked up through the ceiling boards thought the attic was empty, but Molbert said the man's body was found partly inside a barrel.

Molbert said the gun found was also similar to a .22-caliber gun missing from the couple's home.

Norman Olson, 73, and his wife Yvonne, 69, disappeared in August, leaving behind cash, credit cards and thawing meat on the counter of their home in Hettinger, about 100 miles southwest of Bismarck.

Mysterious noises

VA RICHMOND — Authorities have arrested a 15-year-old resident of the neighborhood where mysterious booms have frightened residents since the beginning of the month.

The teenager, who was not identified, was charged with possess-

ing or manufacturing an explosive device. The crime, a felony, carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison.

Other youths might also be involved, according to authorities, who said a citizen tip led them to the suspect.

The explosions were caused by a simple chemical reaction, a city public works spokesman told the Richmond Times-Dispatch. Three devices recovered by police earlier this week were made of common materials, including plastic soda bottles.

Thanksgiving stabbings

MA WORCESTER — A man was charged with stabbing two relatives who allegedly criticized his table manners during Thanksgiving dinner.

Police said the fight broke out when Gonzalo Ocasio, Jr., 18, and his father, Gonzalo Ocasio, 49, rep- rimanded an uncle for picking at the turkey with his fingers, instead of slicing off pieces with a knife, the Worcester Telegram & Gazette reported.

The uncle, Frank Palacios, 24, of Worcester, then allegedly stabbed them with a carving knife.

The father and son were being treated for stab wounds at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center.

Palacios charged with two counts of domestic assault and battery with a dangerous weapon and assault with intent to murder, police said.

Church vandalism

MN ST. PAUL — Police are investigating an informal exorcism at the Cathedral of St. Paul directed at gay Roman Catholics. Officials say the ritualistic sprinkling of blessed oil and salt around the church and in donation boxes amounted to costly vandalism and possibly a hate crime.

The damage was discovered Nov. 7 and will cost thousands of dollars to clean up.

Sheriff gets tough

ID CALDWELL — Canyon County Sheriff George

Nourse believes classifying gang violence as domestic terrorism could help blunt the escalation of street violence. The number of shooting reports in the county of 150,000 people is approaching 200 since July. Two men have been killed and several others wounded.

The city of Caldwell has asked for federal financial help to increase resources to fight street violence and provide young people with alternatives to gang involvement.

Checking out history

NH KEENE — People checking out books from Keene's public library now can check out the library's history.

About 130 years of library records have been preserved on microfilm with the help of a state conservation grant. The project cost about \$4,000 — the money was provided through the state's "moose" charity license plate program.

The records range from 1859 minutes of library board trustee meetings through the late 1990s.

Stories and photos from wire services



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**Kid Cuisine
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Pizza**
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**Banquet
Chicken Breast
Nuggets**
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**Purina
Chew-Eze
Rolls**
\$2.52



**Purina
Busy Bee
Treats**
7 oz.
\$2.63



**Gorton
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Reg. \$2.40
Sale \$1.99



**Contessa
Shrimp**
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Tail-on Peeled
and Cleaned
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Sale \$12.99



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Party Platter**
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AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on the first Scoreboard page in the sports section or AFN's Web site at <http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil/>

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2004

(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-EUROPE)	(AFN-KOREA)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-PACIFIC)
9:00 Stanley <i>"Platypus Problems"</i>	Movie *** <i>"Catch a Falling Star"</i> (2000, Romance) Sela Ward, John Stanley	Dr. Phil	Jopardy!	Nightline	NBA Basketball Teams to Be Announced. (Taped)	30 Minute Meals	Jopardy!
9:30 <i>Sagwa-Sagamee Cat</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Nightly Business Report		Sweet Dreams	Headline News
10:00 <i>Arthur (E)</i>		(348) Oprah Winfrey	ESPNews	Hardball With Chris Matthews		Star Trek: Enterprise	ESPNews
10:30 <i>Between the Lions (E)</i>	(46) Movie *** <i>"Awakenings"</i> (1990, Drama) Robin Williams, Robert De Niro. An experimental drug revives victims of sleeping sickness.	(33) Guiding Light	Advisory Board	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripped	Pacific Report
11:00 <i>Sagwa-Sagamee Cat</i>		(17) General Hospital	NFL Football St. Louis Rams at Green Bay Packers. From Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis.	CNN Daybreak		E News	NFL Football St. Louis Rams at Green Bay Packers. From Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis.
11:30 <i>Stanley</i>		Today Jimmy Buffet, Mary Higgins Clark, Carol Higgins Clark.	Today Jimmy Buffet, Mary Higgins Clark, Carol Higgins Clark.	Good Morning America		The King of Queens	That '70s Show
12:00 <i>Dora the Explorer</i>		Judge Judy	Headline News		NBA Basketball Teams to Be Announced. (Taped)	Giftwishes "The Pact"	Giftwishes "The Pact"
12:30 <i>The Wiggles</i>		Headline News	Headline News			Charmed "We're Off to See the Wizard"	Aly McBeal "Boy Next Door"
13:00 <i>Bob the Builder</i>	Movie *** <i>"Ride to Freedom: The Rosa Parks Story"</i> (2002, Drama) Angela Bassett, Cicely Tyson	Spy	The Tonight Show	Headline News		Any Day Now "What If?"	Headline News
13:30 <i>Dragon Tales (E)</i>		Animatronics	Teen Kids News (E)	Channel One		ER "Brothers & Sisters"	Headline News
14:00 <i>Blue's Clues "Geography!"</i>		Braceface	Headline News	The Early Show		Law & Order "Slasher"	Headline News
14:30 <i>Barney & Friends (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		The Simpsons	Dennis Miller
15:00 <i>Funtastic Home Videos</i>	(250) Movie *** <i>"The Education of Little Tree"</i> (1997, Drama) James Cromwell, Tanja Carroll, Joseph Ashton	Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		NBA Fastbreak	Star Trek: Enterprise "Exile"
15:30 <i>Full House</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation "Random Acts of Violence"	Countdown With Keith Olbermann
16:00 <i>Pokemon</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Biography "Santa Claus"	The Hot List
16:30 <i>Yu-Gi-Oh! (Part 2 of 2)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
17:00 <i>The Amanda Show</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		The Hot List	Headline News
17:30 <i>Rockstar Power</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
18:00 <i>SpongeBob SquarePants</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
18:30 <i>Rugrats</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
19:00 <i>The Proud Family</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
19:30 <i>The Amanda Show</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
20:00 <i>Everwood "The Price of Fame"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
20:30 <i>Sister, Sister "Kid in Play"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
21:00 <i>Sister, Sister "Ocean Love"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
21:30 <i>The Cosby Show "The Big"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
22:00 <i>Home Improvement</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
22:30 <i>Touched by an Angel "An Angel by Any Other Name"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News
23:00 <i>Movie *** "Mo' Better Blues"</i> (1990) Spike Lee		Headline News	Headline News	FOX News		Friends	Headline News

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2004

00:00 <i>Hero Arnold</i>	(1130) Movie *** <i>"Mo' Better Blues"</i> (1990, Drama)	NFL Live	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night	Play With Me Sesame
00:30 <i>Rockstar Power</i>		Access Hollywood	Access Hollywood	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night	Star Trek: Enterprise "Exile"
1:00 <i>SpongeBob SquarePants</i>		NFL Live	Blue's Clues	ABC World News Tonight	College Basketball Michigan at Georgia Tech. (Live)	Star Trek: Enterprise "Exile"	Blue's Clues
1:30 <i>Rugrats</i>		College Basketball Florida State at Minnesota. (Live)	Wheel of Fortune	CBS Evening News	Countdown With Keith Olbermann	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation "Random Acts of Violence"	Wheel of Fortune
2:00 <i>The Proud Family</i>		Headline News	Dr. Phil	Countdown With Keith Olbermann	Hannity & Colmes	Biography "Santa Claus"	Dr. Phil
2:30 <i>The Amanda Show</i>		Headline News	Oprah Winfrey	Hannity & Colmes	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
3:00 <i>Everwood "The Price of Fame"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
3:30 <i>Sister, Sister "Kid in Play"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
4:00 <i>Sister, Sister "Ocean Love"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
4:30 <i>Sesame Street (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
5:00 <i>Barney & Friends (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
5:30 <i>Blue's Clues (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
6:00 <i>Dragon Tales (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
6:30 <i>The Wiggles</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
7:00 <i>Dora the Explorer</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
7:30 <i>Bob the Builder</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
8:00 <i>The Wiggles</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
8:30 <i>Dora the Explorer</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
9:00 <i>Stanley Stanley loses a race.</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
9:30 <i>Sagwa-Sagamee Cat</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
10:00 <i>Arthur (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
10:30 <i>Between the Lions "Teatime"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
11:00 <i>Sagwa-Sagamee Cat</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
11:30 <i>Stanley</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
12:00 <i>Dora the Explorer</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
12:30 <i>The Wiggles "Food"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
13:00 <i>Bob the Builder</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
13:30 <i>Dragon Tales (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
14:00 <i>Blue's Clues "Friend's Place"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
14:30 <i>Barney & Friends (E)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
15:00 <i>Funtastic Home Videos</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
15:30 <i>Full House</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
16:00 <i>Pokemon</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
16:30 <i>Yu-Gi-Oh! (Part 2 of 2)</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
17:00 <i>Asahi! Real Monsters</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
17:30 <i>Rockstar Power</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
18:00 <i>SpongeBob SquarePants</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
18:30 <i>Rugrats</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
19:00 <i>The Amanda Show</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
19:30 <i>Kenan & Kel</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
20:00 <i>Gilmore Girls "Hammers and Wires"</i> (Part 2 of 2)		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
20:30 <i>Depressed: Next</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
21:00 <i>Depressed: Next</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
21:30 <i>The Cosby Show</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
22:00 <i>Home Improvement</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
22:30 <i>Touched by an Angel "A Delicate Balance"</i>		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey
23:00 <i>Movie *** "Artpulse"</i> (1988, Comedy) Robert Relys		Headline News	Headline News	Headline News	College Basketball Michigan State at Duke. (Live)	Biography "Santa Claus"	Oprah Winfrey

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FACES

Roberts gives birth to twins

It's a girl and a boy for actress Julia Roberts and her husband, cinematographer **Danny Moder**. Roberts gave birth to twins **Hazel Patricia Moder** and **Phinnaeus Walter Moder** on Sunday morning at a Southern California hospital, publicist **Marcy Engelman** said Sunday.

Roberts, 37, was confined to bed last month after experiencing a series of early contractions and wasn't due until early January.

Engelman said Sunday in a phone interview that "mother and babies are doing great," but didn't release the twins' weights or other details.

Roberts, who skyrocketed to fame with "Pretty Woman" in 1990, has two films coming out in early December — **Mike Nichols'** "Closer" and "Ocean's Twelve," the **Steven Soderbergh**-directed sequel to 2001's star-studded heist caper.

Roberts married **Moder** in July 2002 at her home in Taos, N.M. The twins are the first children for Roberts, who won the best actress Oscar in 2001 for "Erin Brockovich."



Roberts

Prison chow not a good thing

The food at the Federal Corrections Camp in Alderson, W.Va., apparently is nothing to write home about — unless one is eating it with **Martha Stewart**.

Roman Catholic nun **Carol Gilbert**, 57, who is serving time in the same prison with the famous housemaker, says she enjoys eating with Stewart, although the setting could be better.

"We're not talking about a tea party," Gilbert's attorney, **Sue Tyburski**, told Denver's Rocky Mountain News for a story in Saturday's editions. "We're talking about a big cafeteria setting with the terrible food."

Gilbert is serving 33 months on convictions of obstructing the national defense and damaging government property for her role in an anti-war protest in 2002. Stewart was convicted on obstruction of justice in May and began serving her five-month sentence at the women's federal prison Oct. 8.

Politician/rock star collapses at beach

Australian rock star-turned-lawmaker **Peter Garrett** was hospitalized after collapsing on a Sydney beach after a morning swim, authorities said.

Garrett, former lead singer of **Midnight Oil**, collapsed on Maroubra beach early Saturday. Lifeguards came to his aid when he collapsed as he waded from the water where he had been body surfing.

He was discharged from **Prince Wales Hospital** on Saturday evening, saying he would undergo further tests to determine why he had collapsed.

Garrett's political adviser **Simon Balderstone** said Garrett had no history of medical problems. "He's very fit and healthy, and it's probably fair to say he's a lot fitter and healthier than your average 51-year-old Australian male," he said.



Garrett

Illinois Republicans get ribbing

Democratic Sen.-elect **Barack Obama** poked fun at the Illinois Republican Party when he appeared as a guest on the "Late Show with **David Letterman**."

Obama told Letterman on Friday night's show that after Republican challenger **Jack Ryan** dropped out of the race in June, the state's GOP "couldn't find anyone out of the 12 million people in Illinois to run against me." Instead, Illinois Republicans picked **Alan Keyes**, a conservative political commentator from Maryland to replace Ryan on the November ballot.

Obama won 70 percent of the vote on Nov. 2 compared to 27 percent for Keyes.



Obama

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



Members of the R&B group **New Edition**, from left, **Johnny Gill**, **Ricky Bell**, **Ralph Tresvant**, **Mike Binns** and **Ron DeVoe**, pose for a picture in September before the half-time show of the New York Urban League Classic football game between Morgan State University and Hampton University at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

New Edition struggles with 'old school' comeback

BY NEKESA MUMBI MOODY

The Associated Press

OVER the past two decades, **New Edition** has managed to overcome the kind of obstacles that have sent other groups hurtling into "Whatever Happened To..." territory.

They aced their transition from preteen bubblegum pop to adult R&B, survived the loss (and subsequent reappearance) of the dynamic **Bobby Brown**, endured lackluster sales and flourished despite divergent career paths and stretches of inactivity.

Yet their latest comeback attempt may prove the most difficult one yet.

On Nov. 9, **Ralph Tresvant**, **Johnny Gill**, **Michael Binns**, **Ricky Bell** and **Ronnie DeVoe** released "One Love," their eighth album, after an eight-year layoff. Although signed to **Diddy's** youth-oriented **Bad Boy** label, they've still got "old-school" stamped all over them. And that's part of the problem, especially in an R&B market dominated by young stars with a hip-hop bent.

"Already they've struggled — the album's first single, 'Hot 2Nite,' peaked at just No. 35 on Billboard's Top 100 R&B and Hip-Hop chart."

The Boston-based group — once again without **Bobby Brown** — is well aware of the challenges. Sitting together in a Washington hotel conference room after a planned concert was scrapped due to technical issues, the men nod their heads in agreement when talking about the ruthlessness of today's market.

"We've been in the business for 20 years or more but we haven't been on radio consistently year after year. The game changes," said **Bell**.

Binns is even more blunt: "They send you home early. I think this generation is a little more colder."

And **DeVoe** says a recent conversation with a young teen about her music favorites confirmed his worst fears.

"She said, 'Let me start with the people I don't like. 50 Cent — he's played out.' How is 50 Cent played out? He only had one record! [But] it's like that across the board," he lamented.

Still, **New Edition** has reason to be hopeful. Their last record, 1996's "Home Again," also came after an eight-year layoff — and sold more than two million copies.

And their recent tour showed they still have an audience: At this summer's **Essence Festival**, where acts such as **Prince** and **Mary J. Blige** were billed as the main draw, **New Edition** got one of the wildest receptions, as thirty-something women shrieked like teenagers and men in baggy jeans awayed to past hits such as "Can You Stand The Rain," "Mr. Telephone Man," and "Candy Girl."

"They have such a broad core audience," says producer **Jimmie Jam**, who along with partner **Terry Lewis** worked with the group on the new disc, which incorporates a bit of today's hip-hop sound along with the polished R&B grooves that **New Edition** fans have come to expect. "It really benefits them when they're coming out with a record that they have fan base to draw upon."

"As far as their showmanship and the energy when they hit the screen and the stage... they're like, professional," says another "One Love" producer, **Stevie J**. "Kids are going to get a chance to hear some classic sounds from an older R&B group."

"They have to reinvent themselves," he said. "It's going to happen."

Not that **New Edition** is exactly ancient: They're all in their mid to late 30s. "The crazy part about it is they're not older than most of the people that are in the game right now, it's just that they started so young," says **P. Diddy**.

New Edition was the '80s answer to **The Jackson Five**. With hits such as "Popcorn Love," they endeavored themselves to R&B teenyboppers and helped rejuvenate the teen music scene, spawning imitators such as fellow Boston natives **New Kids on the Block**. But unlike other teen groups, they managed to stick around past puberty, and even withstood personnel changes, including the loss of **Brown** in the late '80s (he briefly rejoined the group for 1996's "Home Again" album and tour) and the addition of **Gill** around the same time.

Although the **P. Diddy** connection has provided some pre-release hype, the group acknowledges the difficulties of capitalizing on it. **Binns** said the market is so saturated with rap it's hard for any R&B act to get attention.

"If you look at a [radio] playlist... out of the top 20 records they're playing, 15 of them are hip-hop. So there's no room for R&B, and it's not just us, it's everybody," he said.

But they still plan on getting on that list — even if it takes them a while to do it.

OPINION

After NBA melee, objectivity takes a beating

There's an old joke about a guy who went to a fight and saw a hockey game break out. The guy had not gotten that bad at the NBA yet, although you might think so from coverage of the recent "basketball brawl" at a Detroit Pistons-Indiana Pacers game.

Clarence Page

Coming just in time to give Americans something besides politics to discuss over Thanksgiving dinner, the dropping footage of the Nov. 19 fracas between players and fans at in Detroit's Palace of Auburn Hills has aired over and over again like a commercial for some sort of a "Negroes Gone Wild" video.

As a black American who takes pride in the way historical black sports heroes such as Jackie Robinson or Michael Jordan helped ease social barriers and racial tensions, I feel not only outraged but downright wounded by the sight of black players who call themselves "professionals" losing their cool in a fracas with a mostly white crowd of sports fans, even when those fans have seats that are more expensive than I can afford.

Sure, some of those fans clearly deserved a good whupping when

their boorish heckling turned violent. But even when responding to throw objects that included a chair, a large food drinking cup, and showers of beer and popcorn, there's no way that a player is going to come out ahead in the eyes of most onlookers.

Imagine, for example, the backlash against Larry Bird back in his playing days if he had decided to put the smackdown on Spike Lee's relentless heckling from courtside. Bird could have squashed the pint-sized filmmaker like a bug, but his good-guy image remains intact because he didn't.

So, kudos to NBA Commissioner David Stern for imposing tough penalties on Indiana forward Ron Artest and other players involved in the brawl. Banishments from future games would be appropriate minimum punishment for the involved fans, too. The county prosecutor said he would seek felony charges against whoever threw the chair. Good for him. Obnoxious shouting is bad enough. Throwing furniture is felonious.

The next step, in my view, should be the ejection of excessively obnoxious fans, although in some towns that could virtually clear out the arena.

I am not sure what punishment is appropriate other than shame and ridicule for commentators who care to shed more heat than light on the mess in Michigan. Their names are too numerous to list here, but you know them when you read them or hear them.

One in particular is worthy of note. See if you can guess who's talking from the following quotes: "This is the hip-hop culture on parade. This is gang behavior on parade minus the guns. That's the culture that the NBA has become."

"You look at NBA players and the uniforms, you don't have to go back very far. The uniforms have changed totally. They're now in gang colors. They are in gang styles."

"Just rename the city of Detroit to 'New Fajallah, Michigan,' and then what happens at the Palace of Auburn Hills will be understood by everybody who goes there."

"By the way, has anybody noticed all these outbreaks, all this violence, all this stuff happens in blue cities, ladies and gentlemen? I mean, you don't see this happening in Charlotte. You don't see this sort of stuff happening. But you do see it happening out of Miami; you do see it happening in the blue cities out there. So, you know, call L.A. 'New Mosul, California.' You could call New York 'Baghdad, New York,' and this helps people put this in perspective."

Yes, those hyperbentual gems were uttered by Rush Limbaugh, famous conservative radio talk host and recovering drug addict.

Praising his own "courage" for telling it like it is, Limbaugh noted that his take surely would be tagged as racist. "Well, not by me. Obama? Unsurprisingly so." Pondering to rap music haters? Yes, but not racist. A lot of black



folks would agree with a lot of what he says, not because we're self-hating but because we care.

But Rush's slap at blue-state America soared at warp speed to some other zone of reality. One only had to look to the very day after the Detroit disaster to see the Clemson vs. South Carolina college football game erupt into an ugly 10-minute, fourth-quarter brawl that looked like a confrontation between two helmeted street gangs.

To their credit, officials at both schools decided to punish their

players by not accepting any bowl bids this year. Good. That's the collegiate equivalent of going nuclear, as sports punishments go, but it sends an important signal to athletes and others about the value of discipline, keeping your cool and keeping your eye on the check.

If only our pro athletes could learn the same lesson. Then, who knows? It might even spread to us commentators.

Clarence Page is a Chicago Tribune columnist.

With push from us, Indonesia can aid war on terror

BY TION KWA

Iraq and Afghanistan aren't the only fronts in the global war against terrorism. There is also Indonesia. Yet this nation, home to the world's largest population of Muslims, has consistently failed to attract an appropriate level of attention from the American public and Washington. This has proved damaging to the security interests of the United States and of its friends and allies in Asia. For if Iraq and Afghanistan represent America's determination to fight the war against terrorism on its own terms, in Indonesia al-Qaida calls the shots and faces no appreciable effective resistance. There, its Southeast Asian franchise holder, the organization known as Jamaah Islamiyah (JI), has launched one major terrorist attack each year since Sept. 11, 2001, against Western and Western-allied interests — an unprecedented rate of success.

One year, one month and one day after the Sept. 11 attacks, a massive bomb ripped through the heart of Bali, killing 202 people, including 88 young Australian vacationers. This continues to be the single largest terrorist attack after those on 9/11. In 2003 a suicide bomb attack on the J.W. Marriott Hotel in Jakarta killed 12 people. And this year, a car bomb blew up in front of the Australian Embassy, killing nine.

While numerous arrests have been made, resulting in dozens of convictions with sentences ranging from jail time to the death penalty, no reasonable evidence suggests that JI has been crippled. Its operatives are apparently disposable; as militants are arrested or killed, others are ready to take up where they left off.

There is no question that Jamaah Islamiyah holds the advantage on the Indonesian front. And the blame for allowing this to hap-

pen lies equally with Jakarta, for its ambivalence toward international terrorism, and toward Washington, for its failure to convince Indonesia of the threat and to raise that country's capacity for fighting terrorism. ...

As the newly elected president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, put it, he needs "strong legal evidence" of JI's existence in Indonesia. This is like refusing to believe al-Qaida exists because it isn't registered as an NGO. ... This ambivalence has led to at least one irony. As prosecutors try again to build a case against Abubakar Bashir, the influential radical Muslim cleric usually cited as the spiritual leader of JI, they allege that he passed on a decree from Osama bin Laden to "kill Americans and their allies" to students at a JI training camp in the Philippines. But how can prosecutors allege an Indonesian connection to JI when, according

to the government, JI's status in Indonesia has not been established? Such contradictions can only hinder counterterrorism.

U.S. policy toward Indonesia is not without its own problems. The United States continues to resist the best possible means for quickly establishing evidence on JI: handing over an alleged JI terrorist, Ridwan Ismail, to him, better known as Hambali, to Indonesia for trial. Hambali is said to be the former operational chief of JI and, as such, is the highest-ranking officer in custody. But since his capture last year in Thailand and transfer to U.S. custody, American authorities have refused to provide any access to him.

No one has a stronger claim to Hambali than Indonesia. ... An open trial of Hambali would lay out what Jamaah Islamiyah is and what its activities in Indonesia amount to. ...

Equally important in fighting terrorism is

for the United States to resume military relations with Indonesia. They were cut in 1999 amid accusations of human rights abuses in a bloody rampage following East Timor's vote for independence. At a time when terrorists are likely to be testing weak spots for future attacks, the Indonesian military should not be isolated. If the U.S. Congress, which continues to insist on the restriction, believes that the Indonesian military must improve its human rights record, then surely joint training with U.S. troops is a better solution than haughty defiance. ...

Indonesia needs to acknowledge JI's existence. ... And the best way the United States can support this front in the war on terrorism is to more fully engage Jakarta's law enforcement and military institutions.

Tion Kwa is the former editorial page editor of the Far Eastern Economic Review. This column first appeared in The Washington Post.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



Horoscope

Mercury turns retrograde in Sagittarius. For those who are constantly leaving purses, cell phones and electronic organizers behind, now is the time to glue these items to your body — or at the very least put an "I found, return to ..." label in them. In the coming weeks, we'll be constantly backtracking to make sure we're creating clean karma.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (November 30). Your charisma attracts sensational opportunities this year, and you've got the confidence to parlay small wins into big successes. Romance is found sporting or traveling. Consider an Aries or Pisces for lasting love. In January, you get the final verdict on a long-term project. Children make you proud in March.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Press ahead because your hard work will carry you to a new level. Praise from your peers is featured. You may even be admired publicly for your leadership, even though you don't care about recognition. (Yeah, right.)

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're feeling open minded and thus willing to see the beauty in what others consider worthless — for instance, they say, "Graffiti," you say, "Public art!" You're an advocate for the unappreciated.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Buying things won't bring happiness, so why is it so fun? There's much to want and little space to keep it. In feeling for a spontaneous sale, or be willing to negotiate your own price (even if it seems like it's not that kind of store).

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Give your attention to matters of health — after all, if you don't have that, the rest is very hard to appreciate. No matter how "good" you are, there is always room for improvement in this department.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Linguists estimate that there are 6,000 actively spoken languages in the world, and everyone you run into is

apparently speaking a different one of them. Instead of literally trying to understand, read between the lines.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll be asked about your credo, and though you're ready with an answer, the question makes you pause. You may realize that you don't think the same way you used to. Get clear about your new beliefs.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22). Sure, you're turbocharged now, but you can't do everything on the schedule without help. Loved ones make plans that include you, which may seem presumptuous at first. In the end, you'll actually like what you're asked to do.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Devoted to the finer things in life, today, you're a regular bon vivant! However, you'll derive the most joy from family time. You better to pass on all your knowledge and passions to than your own child?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll be tempted to make appointments with people who have the fast fix for your life, but resist. These methods prove to be costly and ineffective. Use inner wisdom and the help of old friends as your guide.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A certain dusk, and a new scene begins. Suddenly, life has an air of the fabulous, like a clever series of vignettes. Friends warm your point of view, so offer up personal accounts of love, life and everything in between.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You are accustomed to marching out of step, so the zany things you have to do to make your life work this afternoon almost seem easy for the day after, you will be back to normal.

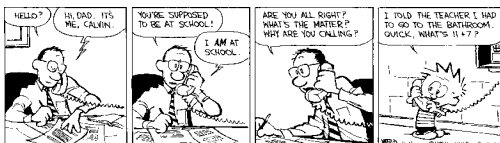
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Yours is a fast-paced, caffeine-fueled experience. Put the spotlight on the sly, cute and stylish things you see. Make plans to be around someone who is almost always engaging and often entertaining.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



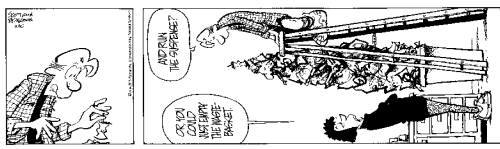
Calvin and Hobbes



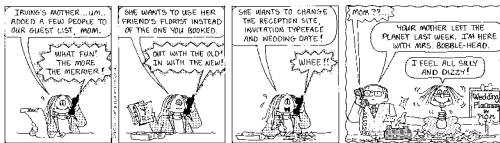
Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



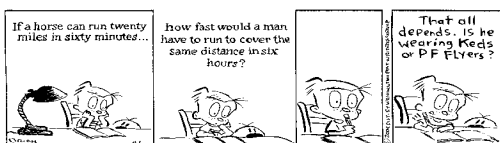
Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



Better or Worse



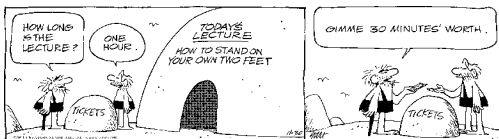
Peanuts



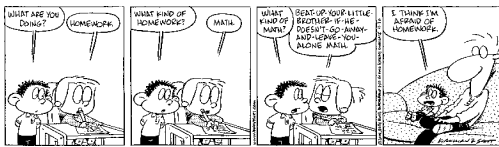
Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



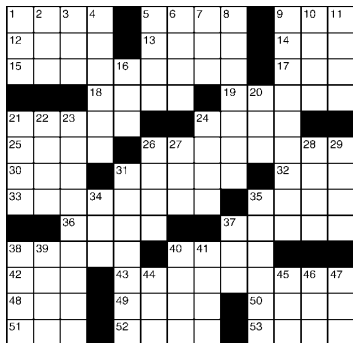
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Shut noisily
- 5 Woodwind
- 9 Law enforcer
- 12 Guadalajara
- 13 Telephone, slangly
- 14 Flamenco cheer
- 15 Clarified
- 17 Keanu, in "The Matrix"
- 18 PC picture
- 19 Author Sinclair
- 21 Marsh plant
- 24 Geometry answer
- 25 Analgesic's target
- 26 Speed
- 30 Air-tree connector
- 31 Salary
- 32 Dundee denial
- 33 Union events
- 35 Trombone end
- 36 Em or Bee
- 37 Mountain air
- 38 Unquestioning
- 40 Progeny
- 42 Scooted
- 43 Amateurish
- 48 Rage
- 49 Hammer-head part
- 50 Inlet
- 51 Peculiar
- 52 Toolshop supply
- 53 Paradise

Down

- 1 That girl
- 2 Bagel topping
- 3 Mont Blanc, e.g.
- 4 Slender
- 5 Part of B.&O.
- 6 Former German capital
- 7 Tramcar load
- 8 Withstands
- 9 Held
- 10 Toast enhancer
- 11 Manual laborer
- 16 Expert
- 20 Through
- 21 Jet forth
- 22 Relaxation
- 23 Treated
- 24 With scum
- 25 Brewery products
- 26 Lacks the skills
- 27 Batter ingredient
- 28 Story
- 29 Scream
- 31 Conclusions
- 34 Press for payment
- 35 Upper part of a dress
- 37 Nay canceler
- 38 Vivacity
- 39 Solid fat
- 40 Crookpot recipe
- 41 Sea flock
- 44 Teachers' org.
- 45 Pal of Wynken and Blythen
- 46 First lady
- 47 Hideaway

Answer to Previous Puzzle SOLUTION TIME: 21 MINS.



11-30 CRYPTOQUIP

TA YMTYZYTG VIE PSVP VJN

JNRAZYMW VOVIN QNPNJE

QAMEYTNJ PSNRENIZNE

V QAJN WJAGO?

Yesterday's Cryptquip: I HAVE TO ADMIT I LOVE WINNIE-THE-POOH CHARACTERS. WOULD YOU SAY I'M TIGGER-HAPPY?

Today's Cryptquip Clue: P equals T

Nude slumber is prevalent practice

Dear Abby: I'm writing in regard to the mother who discovered her 14-year-old daughter sleeping in the nude. I say bravo to that mother and father for creating a home where the girl felt safe enough to sleep that way.

When I was young, I had an older brother who harassed me. I slept with my ears alert and covers up to my nose. I have been through two divorces — and I wouldn't have allowed myself to be caught sleeping in the nude by either of my husbands. They might come home or wake up in a rage, and I needed to be prepared for whatever might happen.

I now have a husband with whom I'm completely relaxed — so I no longer feel the need to wear anything in bed. I keep a robe at bedside for emergencies, but I now sleep comfortably without nightclothes that wrap around my legs or cut off the

circulation in my arms.

Dear Sleeping Well: I have always considered wearing (or not wearing) clothing in bed to be a comfort issue. It hadn't occurred to me that it might reflect a measure of emotional security.

Read on:

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: The letter from the "Worried Mom" made me laugh, remembering when I was in high school. A group of friends and I decided to "kidnap" four other friends and take them out for breakfast before school. We surprised them in their beds, intending to take them out in public in their pajamas.

All was well until the third house. Like the girl in the letter, our friend "Angie" slept in the nude. I have never seen anyone blush harder than she did that morning.

— Christa in Salt Lake City
Dear Christa: I guess the "surprise" was on YOU.

Dear Abby: I suspect that "Worried Mom" reacted so strongly because she's terrified of her daughter's awakening sexuality, and Mom equates nudity with sex, and sex is "wrong."

Now Mom has two tasks ahead of her. The first is to overcome her own hang-ups. The second is to have a frank discussion with her daughter about how to protect herself in sexual situations. Please tell her to stop worrying.

Sleeping nude is more comfortable.

— Does it Too, Columbia, S.C.
Dear D.I.T.: What was it that Marilyn Monroe used to say? At bedtime her preferred attire was Chanel No. 5.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CEHKT

FARCT

NOYCOT

HARTER

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www.jumble.com

Answer:

THE

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ENVOY RHYME HELMET WEEVIL
Answer: The clock maker stayed late because he enjoyed working — "OVER TIME"

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

THE

(Answers tomorrow)

Dinner is no place for nose exam

Dear Annie: Recently at a family dinner, I had finished eating but were still sitting at the table. My daughter-in-law reached over and plucked a hair out of my son's nostril, held it up, examined it and then brushed it off onto the floor.

Apparently, the hair had been firmly attached, because my son jumped about six inches. There was this big silence, but then conversation resumed, and no one said anything more about it. I've seen the lady pinch my son before, and of course, her mouth never stops, especially in front of their children, but I thought this was a particularly inventive level of public bullying.

What do you think?

— Ticked Off Dear
Ticked Off: OK. NOW we've heard everything. Ick. Your daughter-in-law is overly proprietary toward her husband, and plucking anything out of some-

one else's body at the dinner table is appallingly ill-mannered. Nonetheless, your son (not you) should be the one to tell his wife to keep her follicle-pick-in hands to herself, before she decides to clean his ears, too.

Dear Annie: You printed a letter saying that a verbal thank-you was sufficient if bridal shower gifts were opened in front of the givers.

I disagreed strongly and wrote to tell you so. You sent back an e-mail, informing me that your etiquette information came from Emily Post and if I took issue with it, to contact Peggy Post, who has taken over writing the etiquette book. (She's married to Emily Post's great-grandson.) So I did.

After waiting many weeks to hear back from the Emily Post Institute, I finally received a reply. It seems they have changed their advice. Please tell

everyone.

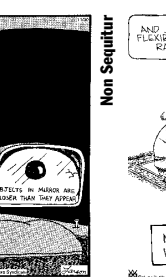
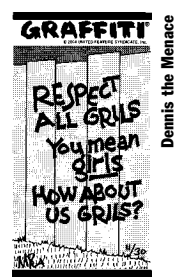
— Concerned in Alabama
Dear Concerned: We don't make the rules, we just print them. We, too, contacted the Emily Post Institute and were told that it has recently published a new, updated book. "The 17th Edition of Emily Post's Etiquette" by Peggy Post (Publisher: HarperCollins. Price \$39.95. In Canada, \$56.95) says that a written thank-you is now preferred, even if the giver was thanked personally at the shower.

The reason given is that most people these days expect written thank-you notes for shower gifts, and showers have grown into grander affairs than in years past, with more guests and more elaborate gifts making it difficult for the honoree to sufficiently extend her thanks in person.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

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In Nextel Cup this season, Busch not the only winner

Year defined by tragedy had its bright spots

By ED HINTON

The Orlando Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. — Because the annual NASCAR awards in New York are so much more serious and prestigious than ours, the only way we can get anybody to notice is to come out earlier than them.

With "The Banquet" still a few days away, here we go with our season-ending recognition of achievement, both distinguished and dubious.

Annually we try to review the good, the bad, the funny and the sad.

But this year we must add the tragic: 2004 will always be known, at least in part, as the year the Hendrick Motorsports plane went down, killing 10 people dear to the NASCAR community.

Before we try to deal with that, the awards, mostly from NASCAR, but also from other racing leagues:

■ **Rudyard Kipling Golden Pitch Helmet:** To NASCAR chairman Brian France, who trusted himself when all men doubted him, and made allowance for their doubting too, and still pushed the Chase for the Championship through from notion into reality, and made it work — quite nicely for the first time out.

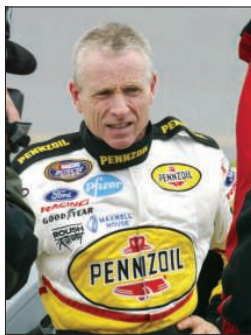
■ **Home Depot Self-Improvement Apron:** To Tony Stewart, who dug out the season without a single penalty for off-track actions — although he did ruffle some people with a little slush-banging on the tracks and a little slush-banging on the press.

(Honorable mention to Jimmy Spencer, who didn't punch out any peer that we know of.)

■ **George W. Bush "Stay the Course" Trophy:** To Ryan Newman, who openly opposed the Chase concept when it was announced, and just as steadfastly opposed the system after he got into the playoffs because of the new structure. He still believes that just because the Chase is exciting and successful doesn't make it fair.

■ **The Nextel Cup:** To Kurt Busch, who won it fair and square, and took it home, regardless of all the criticism I fired at the final race in the Chase. He deserves it, although I still think Jimmie Johnson deserved it more.

■ **Murphy's Law Laureate:** Dale Earnhardt Jr., who was docked 25 points for intentionally spinning out at Bristol, Tenn., in March ... who on a weekend off, seeking fun and relaxation in a sports car race in July, was painfully burned, hampering his NASCAR effort for weeks ... who on Oct. 3 at Talladega, in his glee over winning the race, blurted a



vulgarism on live TV and was penalized another 25 points ... who might have taken the Chase lead by running cautiously at Atlanta on Oct. 31 but went all-out for the win instead, and wrecked himself ... and, who, after all that, still was in the championship hunt, right down to the final race.

■ **Champion in Spirit Award:** To Johnson, who won eight races, most on the Nextel Cup tour, including four of the last six. Three of those wins came after his Hendrick Motorsports team had been devastated by the plane crash.

■ **Profile in Courage Award:** To Chad Knaus, Johnson's crew chief, who rallied their branch of the Hendrick team and kept preparing super race cars at the end.

■ **Man Behind the Cup Goblet:** To Busch's crew chief, Jimmy Fennig, who came down from Milwaukee to work for Bobby Allison in the mid-1980s and has labored long and hard enough in NASCAR ever since, to deserve this championship as much as any pit boss ever has.

■ **Perseverance Plaque, Stock Car Division:** To NASCAR team owner Jack Roush, who went 15 years of coming close without winning a championship, and now has collected two Cups in a row, first with Matt Kenseth in 2003 and now with Busch.

■ **Perseverance Plaque, Open-Wheel Division:** To Kevin Kalkhoven and Gerald Forsythe, co-owners of Champ Car (the league that's what's left of once-prized CART) who not only won't let the gutted series be but have purchased the legendary Cosworth Engineering in Britain to assure a long-term supply of engines. Now that's optimism.

■ **The Mc-Ferrari Medalion:** To Ferrari team principal Jean Todt, for the continued super-spending

Like the Boston Red Sox of past years, NASCAR driver Mark Martin always seems to get painfully close to a championship without winning one. Now that the Red Sox have ended their 86-year drought, maybe 2005 will be Martin's year after nine near-misses on NASCAR's top circuit.

that led Michael Schumacher and Rubens Barrichello to another 1-2 finish in the World Championship this year, further eroding world interest in Formula One. They're so dominant that even the "Tifosi," the Ferrari fanbase worldwide, have lapsed into apathy.

■ **Most Colorful Unsung Champion:** To Tony Kanaan of the Indy Racing League. If the IRL could provide the delightfully funny Brazilian anything like the media exposure NASCAR will give Busch, then Kanaan would become a household name—and a dear one at that—in America.

■ **Red Sox Tradition Trophy:** To Mark Martin, who gets to keep it now that Boston's baseball team has broken its own long tradition of close but no cigar. Martin finished close to the championship, without winning it, for the ninth time in his career.

And now to a separate, very serious category:

■ **Most Courageous Man in Motor Racing:** To Rick Hendrick, who lost his only son, only brother, two nieces and six friends in the team plane crash near Martinsville, Va. on Oct. 24 ... and still came back to support his troops in the final race at Homestead-Miami.

■ **Finally, sadly, in memoriam:** John Hendrick, Rick's brother, president of the organization. Ricky Hendrick, Rick's son, heir to the company's helm ... Kimberly Hendrick and Jennifer Hendrick, John's twin daughters ... Randy Dorton, the engine maestro, who was the nation's horsepower superior ... Jeff Turner, team general manager ... Joe Jackson, liaison to the team from DuPont ... Scott Lathram, Tony Stewart's helicopter pilot, who was aboard the plane as a guest ... Richard Tracy and Elizabeth Morrison, team pilots.

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College football

AP Top 25

The Top 25 teams in The Associated Press college football poll, with first-place teams in parentheses, records through Nov. 27, total points scored on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote.

15. Tennessee	9-2	802	15
16. Florida St.	8-3	628	19
17. Wisconsin	9-2	612	20
18. Virginia	8-3	469	16
19. Pittsburgh	7-3	304	25
20. Florida	7-4	280	27
21. Arizona St.	8-3	231	18
22. Texas A&M	7-4	199	22
23. Boston College	8-3	172	17
24. Texas Tech	7-4	167	—
25. Ohio St.	7-4	143	—

Others receiving votes: West Virginia 113, Toledo 104, Colorado 43, Florida 33, Memphis 32, Oklahoma 30, Navy 23, Miami (Ohio) 16, UTEP 12, Syracuse 11, Clemson 8, Alabama 7, New Mexico 5, Bowling

Odds are stacked against BCS

Bowl formula has too many problems that time can't heal

BY CHRIS DUFRESNE
Los Angeles Times

"Have patience," University of Oregon President Dave Frohnmayer counseled reporters on a teleconference two weeks ago when it was suggested college football might be fast-tracking toward another laughable conclusion.

Frohnmayer, point man for school presidents rejecting any kind of playoff, said it was "stunning" that so many people were complaining about changes in the Bowl Championship Series formula before the season had even played out.

"Let's see how the postseason stacks up after all the returns are in," he said.

How it's stacking up with one week left in the regular season: Utah and Boise State have already clinched undefeated regular seasons.

Neither has a stake in the national title race because they play in non-BCS conferences — the Mountain West and Western Athletic.

Meanwhile, in the so-called "power" conferences, Pittsburgh of the Big East can clinch a major bowl bid next week even if it loses to South Florida and finishes with a 7-4 record.

Pittsburgh, in fact, may be the first school to earn a BCS game with a coach, Walt Harris, who might get fired. A month ago, Harris' agent demanded his underappreciated client either be handed an extension or his walking papers.

Two-loss Michigan has already wrapped up a Rose Bowl bid and a two-loss team is going to win the Atlantic Coast Conference and a \$16 million bowl berth.

If Colorado beats Oklahoma next week, Gary Barnett's Buffaloes win the Big 12 title with an 8-4 record and could face 7-4 Pitt in the Fiesta Bowl.

That would be eight losses, for two teams, in one BCS bowl, while the Liberty Bowl, which pays \$1.5 million, gets to match 11-0 Boise State against Louisville in a battle of probable top-10 teams.

Remember, though, the Liberty is not a "major" bowl, so pay it no serious attention!

How it's stacking up II: Pitt's in, Michigan's in, Colorado has a puncher's chance yet if it appears early 10-1 California or 10-1 Texas will get left out of a BCS game.

Sorry, boys, but those are the convoluted rules and, thus far, in the at-large animal kingdom bid battle, the Golden Bears are holding off the Longhorns.

Texas coach Mack Brown was so apologetic over possibly getting shut out of a BCS game — despite not winning his own division of his own conference — he resorted to begging for votes after Texas' holiday-weekend win over Texas A&M.

Based on Sunday's poll votes, Mack, you need to hire Karl Rove.

California picked up five points on Texas in the writers' poll and nine points in the coaches'.

How it's stacking up III: USC, Oklahoma and Auburn are all undefeated headed into regular-season finale games. All will be fa-



Pittsburgh quarterback Tyler Palko liked the noise the crowd made when the Panthers upset West Virginia, but now the chatter is that the Panthers don't belong in a BCS bowl.



Knowing his Longhorns are likely to be left out of the BCS again this year despite a No. 5 ranking, Texas coach Mack Brown lobbied for votes after beating Texas A&M last week.

vored to win next weekend.

Wait, though — there has never been a BCS season in which more than two top-10 teams have ended with no losses. And now there could be five? Isn't this against the rules? Unfortunately, you can't cram five, four or three undefeated teams into one BCS championship game, so this is shaping up to be a quite a quagmire.

The three top schools are all making vehement claims for being best in BCS show.

USC, for example, was leading Notre Dame, 34-10, late in Saturday's game and then made it 41-10 on a touchdown set up by a fake punt on fourth down.

No way was USC coach Pete Carroll trying to tack on a score to impress the judges, even though, that very same day, two yahoos on ABC — or was it two ABC's on Yahoo? — claimed USC was a bogus No. 1 and that Oklahoma and Auburn deserved to play for the title.

For what it's worth, one analyst played running back for the only school ever to receive

the NCAA "death penalty" and the other played for ... Notre Dame.

Fear not, though, because former Notre Dame coach Bob Davie has a "simple solution" for saving the BCS.

Davie presented in written and oral arguments last week a proposal to have all 117 Division I-A coaches vote for the two teams they want to play for the national title.

That's right, the coaches.

Davie says give these O-and-X-men a box of tapes and two days and they'll figure out the two best teams.

"Let them decide their national champion," Davie wrote.

Davie is a tremendous ESPN analyst — much better at breaking down action than he was at whipping the Irish into national contention — yet his idea of turning the BCS over to the coaches is akin to turning a hen house over to the foxes.

Davie wants to add more voting coaches to the gaggle that last year had USC at No. 1 until the Trojans defeated Michigan in the Rose Bowl, after which the coaches awarded their share of the national championship to Louisiana State.

These are the same voting coaches who recently voted, 32-29, not to make their final ballots public this year.

And no wonder, given that last week, California lost points in the coaches' poll to Texas after the Bears beat Stanford by 35 points and the Longhorns spent the weekend finding hay to bevo.

These are the same coaches who, in 1997, had Michigan No. 1 until it had the gall to beat Washington State in the Rose Bowl.

Let the coaches decide? Even tossing aside all the lost logic, Davie fails to mention that The Associated Press poll is independent of the coaches and is not going away, so what controversy has Davie solved?

"Have patience," counseled the university president from the school where the movie "Animal House" was filmed.

Pardon us if we think a food fight might be a better way to produce a champion than what the BCS currently offers.

True, there is one week left for some of this potential mess to sort itself out.

Time is running short, however, the BCS is on the clock and, frankly, patience is wearing thin.

Auburn still third with little it can do

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

Auburn needs an upset. The Tigers are still stuck behind first-place Southern California and second-place Oklahoma in the Bowl Championship Series standings, heading into the final weekend before the national title game is decided.

Third-place Auburn needs to beat Tennessee in the Southeastern Conference title game Saturday and hope for USC to lose at UCLA or Oklahoma to fall in the Big 12 title game against Colorado to earn a spot in the Orange Bowl and play for the BCS championship.

USC improved its BCS grade in the standings released Monday to .9834, and padded its lead over the Sooners (.9611). The Tigers have a grade of .9342.

While Oklahoma and Auburn were idle last week, the Trojans beat Notre Dame 41-10 to regain some support in The Associated Press Top 25 and coaches poll.

The polls each count for a third of a team's BCS grade. A compilation of six computer rankings are used to determine the other third.

USC holds a big lead in both polls, ahead of No. 2 Oklahoma and No. 3 Auburn. The Sooners and Tigers are separated by a total of only 17 points in the two polls, but the BCS computers have pegged Oklahoma as the No. 1 team in the country with USC second and Auburn third.

California (.8431) barely held on to the fourth spot, ahead of Texas (.8418), after the Longhorns ended the season with a 26-13 victory over Texas A&M last week.

The Golden Bears will lock up a spot in the BCS by beating Southern Mississippi at Saturday. The Bears would play in the Rose Bowl for the first time in 45 years if USC ends up in the Orange Bowl.

Texas is again on the verge of being left out of the BCS, despite being ranked among the top teams.

Sixth-place Utah (.8224) is guaranteed an at-large bid in a game from a non-BCS conference with a top-six finish in the BCS standings. The Utes (11-0), from the Mountain West Conference, finished their season two weeks ago and are sure to become the first team from a mid-major conference to play in the BCS.

Last season, Texas was bumped from an at-large BCS bid when Kansas State upset Oklahoma in the Big 12 title game to give the Wildcat an automatic berth and make the Sooners an at-large team.

Boise State (.6510) dropped from seventh to ninth in the BCS standings behind Georgia (.6948). The Broncos (11-0) from the Western Athletic Conference were trying to join Utah in the top six and grab a spot in one of the four bowl games worth more than \$14 million.

Heels have little trouble with USC

BY KEITH PARSONS
The Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Southern California coach Henry Bibby got a lot better look at North Carolina than he needed. "We played probably a Final Four team," Bibby said. "We aren't going to see too many teams better than the team we faced tonight."

Playing their fifth game in eight days, the 11th-ranked Tar Heels got 23 points from Jawad Williams and 17 from Sean May to beat the Trojans 97-65 Sunday night.

Raymond Felton added 12 assists for North Carolina (4-1), which won the Maui Invitational in convincing fashion last week, outscoring its opponents by an average of 21 points. An all-night plane ride got the players back to campus late Friday, and they practiced almost immediately.

Another workout followed on Saturday, then the Tar Heels quickly went to work on Southern California (1-1).

"We needed something to humble us a bit," Bibby said. "It puts things back into perspective for us. We need to go back to the drawing board."

The score was tied only at 2, and Jackie Manuel's jumper gave North Carolina the lead for good. It reached double figures on

a three-pointer by Rashad McCants about 6½ minutes into the first half, and May's free throw made it a 20-point margin with about 5 minutes left.

"I was worried about us being a little stagnant, a little too casual out there," Tar Heels coach Roy Williams said. "I feel very good about the win. I think we played exceptionally well."

North Carolina had a 22-5 run to close the opening 20 minutes, and the Trojans never recovered. This wasn't quite the homecoming Bibby wanted — he grew up in tiny Franklinton, about 30 miles from Chapel Hill.

Jeff McMillan scored 10 points for USC, which fell to 0-7 against North Carolina.

"It just shows me how much work we need to do to get where we need to be," Bibby said. "I thought the kids played hard out on the floor, but I don't think we always played smart. They'll get better as things go on."

Scoring never was a problem for the Tar Heels, who returned the Atlantic Coast Conference's top scorer (McCants), top rebounder (Felton) and assist man (Felton) Roy Williams' second season. This was their third straight game with at least 90 points.

Their play on the other end of the court has been the focus, and so far, North Carolina

appears better. The Trojans shot only 35 percent and had 28 turnovers, including 16 in the first half.

"I think we were in a little bit of a frenzy defensively in the first half, and that's good, if you can still be fundamentally sound," Roy Williams said.

The change was apparent during the decisive spurts. USC shot 2-for-10 in the final 7½ minutes, including a block by the 6-foot-4 McCants on the 6-11 Rory O'Neil. That started a highlight-reel fast break, with McCants whirling around Derrick Craven and passing to Felton, who lobbed the ball to Jawad Williams for a powerful dunk.

At that point, the Tar Heels led 56-25 — their first 30-point lead of the game — and the second half essentially was garbage time.

"I think we were doing some trapping out there that was frustrating them," May said. "They lost their rhythm."

Another point of emphasis for North Carolina this season has been sharing the ball, and if the first half was any indication, that problem is solved, too. Every player who got on the court had at least one assist, led by Felton's six, and 17 of the 22 baskets came after assists.

"When you see somebody passing the ball to a teammate, it makes you want to



North Carolina's Jawad Williams, right, draws a foul on Southern Cal's Gregg Guenther (4) on Sunday. Williams scored a game-high 23 points.

pass it," Manuel said. "To me, when I pass the ball to somebody and he scores, that feels just as good as when I score."

Irish get invited to Insight

The Associated Press

Notre Dame accepted an invitation Sunday to play in the Insight Bowl in Phoenix against a Pac-10 team on Dec. 28.

The Irish (6-5) accepted the bid a day after losing to Southern California 41-10.

"It makes the winter a lot easier if you finish on a high note as opposed to finishing on a losing note with that losing taste in your mouth," Irish coach Tyrone Willingham said.

In other bowls, Minnesota accepted a bid to the Music City Bowl; North Texas will face Southern Mississippi in the New Orleans Bowl; Memphis will play in the GMAC Bowl; Alabama-Birmingham accepted a bid to the Hawaii Bowl; and Cincinnati accepted an invitation to the Fort Worth Bowl.

Notre Dame has lost three of its last four games. The Irish have a six-game losing streak in bowl games.

The Insight Bowl has a \$750,000 payout.

Notre Dame's opponent is supposed to be the fourth- or fifth-place team in the Pac-10. The Irish could face Arizona State (8-2), UCLA (6-4) or Oregon State (6-5).

In the Music City Bowl, Minnesota will take on a Southeastern Conference opponent to be determined in Nashville, Tenn., on Dec. 31.

The Golden Gophers will be making their third straight bowl

College bowl schedule

Tuesday, Dec. 14 New Orleans Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 North Texas (7-4) vs. CUSA Tuesdays, Dec. 14 Champs Sports Bowl Payoff: \$500,000 ACC vs. Big 12	Wednesday, Dec. 22 GMAC Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 CUSA vs. MAC or WAC Thursday, Dec. 23 Ford W. Smith Bowl Payoff: \$1.5 million CUSA No. 6 vs. Big 12 No. 6 Friday, Dec. 24 Hawaii Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 CUSA vs. WAC	Monday, Dec. 27 MPC Computers Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 WAC vs. ACC No. 1 Motor City Bowl Payoff: \$150,000 MAC vs. Big Ten No. 7 Tuesday, Dec. 28 Independence Bowl Payoff: \$1.2 million Big 12 vs. SEC	Insight Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 Pac-10 No. 1 vs. Notre Dame (6-5) Wednesday, Dec. 29 Payoff: \$1.1 million Texas-Est Paso (8-3) vs. Big 12 Thursday, Dec. 30 Ohio State (8-3) vs. Big 12 Thursday, Dec. 30 Continental Tire Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 Big East No. 4 vs. S. Carolina (6-5)	Emerald Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 MWC No. 3 vs. Navy (6-2) Friday, Dec. 31 Payoff: \$2 million Pac-10 No. 2 vs. Big 12 No. 3 Silicon Valley Classic Payoff: \$750,000 WAC vs. MAC, I-10 Friday, Dec. 31 Music City Bowl Payoff: \$750,000 SEC vs. Big Ten No. 1 Sun Bowl Payoff: \$1.5 million Purdue (7-4) vs. Pac-10 No. 3 Liberty Bowl Payoff: \$1.35 million MWC champion or TCU vs. Louisville (9-1)	Peach Bowl Payoff: \$2.2 million ACC No. 3 vs. SEC Saturday, Jan. 1 Cotton Bowl Payoff: \$2 million SEC vs. Big 12 No. 2 Outback Bowl Payoff: \$2.75 million Wisconsin (9-2) vs. SEC No. 3 Gator Bowl Payoff: \$1.6 million ACC No. 2 vs. Big East No. 2 Capital One Bowl Payoff: \$5.187 million Iowa (9-2) vs. SEC Rose Bowl Payoff: \$1.5 million Michigan (9-2) vs. Pac-10 champion or TCU Fiesta Bowl Payoff: \$11-14 million BCS vs. BCS Monday, Jan. 3 Sugar Bowl Payoff: \$11-14 million BCS vs. BCS Tuesday, Jan. 4 Camping World Payoff: \$11-14 million BCS vs. BCS
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appearance, and fifth in six seasons.

In the New Orleans Bowl, Sun Belt Conference champion North Texas will take on Southern Mississippi on Dec. 14.

Southern Miss (6-4, 5-3 Conference USA) accepted an invitation to the game after becoming bowl eligible with a 26-21 win over Alabama-Birmingham on Saturday. The Golden Eagles will play in bowl game for the seventh time in eight years.

North Texas (7-4, 7-0) secured its fourth consecutive trip to the bowl by clinching the Sun Belt Conference on Nov. 13.

In the GMAC Bowl, Memphis was to accept an invitation Monday for the game against a

Mid-America Conference team in Mobile, Ala., on Dec. 22.

Memphis' opponent will be announced later this week. GMAC Bowl selection committee chairman Murray Cape said four MAC teams — Toledo, Bowling Green, Northern Illinois and Miami of Ohio — are possible opponents.

In the Hawaii Bowl, Alabama-Birmingham will be making its first bowl appearance on Dec. 24.

The Blazers (7-4, 5-3 in Conference USA) set to Southern Mississippi 26-21 Saturday. Their opponent for the game will be determined.

In the Fort Worth Bowl, Cincinnati (6-5) rallied from a 2-4 start to earn its fourth bowl appearance in the last five seasons.

Stanford coach Teevens fired after three seasons

The Associated Press

STANFORD, Calif. — Stanford football coach Buddy Teevens was fired after three straight losing seasons, an athletic department source said Monday on condition of anonymity.

The school called an afternoon news conference. A call to Teevens' home Monday was not immediately returned.

Athletic director Ted Leland, a close personal friend of Teevens, met with the coach last week after the Cardinal finished 4-7 for the second consecutive year. Stanford lost 41-6 to archrival California in the Big Game on Nov. 20 for its fifth straight defeat, ending a season that began 4-2 with hopes of a bowl game.

The 48-year-old Teevens, who had two years remaining on his contract, is the first Stanford football coach to be fired since Jack Elway was dismissed in 1988 after going 3-6-2.

Stanford has six recruits coming to campus this weekend, and Leland wanted a decision on Teevens' job status to be resolved before then.

Fans and alumni seemed to lose faith in Teevens for good following the embarrassing Big Game defeat. The Cardinal showed little poise in the waning moments, getting flagged for several personal fouls. Stanford struggled to score throughout Teevens' tenure.

Teevens finished with a 10-23 record in three seasons after taking over the program when Tyrone Willingham bolted for Notre Dame following the 2001 season. Teevens spent the three previous seasons as Steve Sparano's staff at Florida.

Teevens was fired as Tulane head coach in 1996 after refusing

Sports briefs

to resign because he didn't want his players to think he'd quit on them.

The Cardinal went 0-13 down the stretch during Teevens' three seasons. They were close in the final minutes in five narrow defeats this season — including 31-28 against No. 1 Southern California on Sept. 25 at Stanford Stadium.

Couples win 5th Skins Game

LA QUINTA, Calif. — Somebody had to win the Skins Game. So why not Mr. Skins himself?

Fred Couples continued his amazing run in the Thanksgiving weekend tournament, prevailing in four playoff holes over Tiger Woods to claim the final three skins and \$340,000, and win his record fifth Skins Game with a total of \$640,000.

Couples won all his money on Sunday, starting with a birdie putt worth \$300,000 and eight skins on the first hole. He finally won the tournament after Woods' tee shot went into the water on the last playoff hole, the par-3, 204-yard 17th at Tuley Golf Club on a cold, windy day in the desert.

Couples, 45, has won a record \$3,515,000 and 77 skins in 11 appearances in the made-for-TV tournament.

Woods finished second with five skins and \$310,000, more money than he won in his previous four Skins Games combined.

After making a sensational Skins Game debut last year, Annika Sorenstam was shut out this time. She and Aussie Adam Scott were eliminated on the first playoff hole.

NFC East title is ho-hum for Eagles

Fourth straight division crown doesn't end ache of playoff failure

BY TOM CANAVAN
The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Other than the black baseball caps with the division championship logo in their lockers, the Philadelphia Eagles didn't celebrate much after winning a fourth straight NFC East title.

Not only have the Eagles (10-1) been there and done that, they also carry the burden of losing the last three NFC title games.

It explains why they were indifferent Sunday after beating the New York Giants 27-6 to win another division title.

"It's an accomplishment, doing it four years in a row," Eagles defensive tackle Darwin Walker said. "How many teams can say that? But we have bigger goals and we want to reach those without a doubt."

The Eagles wrapped up a fifth straight trip to the playoffs by combining a solid second-half offensive performance with an awesome defense that made the NFL's top draft pick, New York quarterback Eli Manning, look very much like a rookie.

Brian Westbrook scored two touchdowns and the Eagles limited Manning to 14 yards passing in the second half.

"We made a lot of big plays today," safety Quintin Mikell said after the Eagles went a second straight week without allowing a touchdown. "That's what we do. We do whatever we have to do to win."

Mikell might have made the biggest play, intercepting Manning's pass in the end zone in the second quarter on first and goal from the 3 with Philadelphia clinging to a 7-6 lead.



Philadelphia's Donovan McNabb looks on helplessly as his fumble is recovered by a New York defender.

Manning and the Giants (5-6) never recovered in losing their fourth straight game.

"We had opportunities early in the game and just didn't capitalize," Giants receiver Amani Toomer said. "That is the story of our season."

The Eagles blew the game open in the second half, scoring 20 points and limiting the Giants to 47 yards in becoming the third team since the 16-game schedule began in 1978 to win a division title by its 11th game. The Chicago Bears (1985) and the San Francisco 49ers (1997) were the others. Chicago won the Super Bowl after the 1985 season.

"It says a lot for our organization and our team as we continue to fight after what happened to us three straight years," said Donovan McNabb, who threw for 244 yards and scored on a 1-yard run. "For us to continue to reload and continue to battle and to come out here and win it so fast says a lot."

David Akers kicked field goals of 37 and 42 yards early in the second

half to give Philadelphia a 13-7 lead. Westbrook iced it with a 1-yard run set up by Jevon Kearse's punt block and a 34-yard scoring reception on a screen pass.

Steve Christie kicked field goals of 22 and 31 yards for New York.

"I have to play better than I did," Manning said after his second start. "I have to go out and perform. I've got to make plays and I can't make turnovers."

Manning finished 6-of-21 for 148 yards and two critical interceptions. He also was sacked five times and seemed confused by the Eagles' frequent blitzes.

"That's a tough situation. All rookies are going to struggle," Eagles defensive coordinator Jim Johnson said. "The game is fast. He had never gone against the Eagles."

Mikell's interception came after Osi Umenyiora recovered a fumble by McNabb at the New York 45 and Manning and Jamar Taylor combined on a 52-yard pass to the 3. On first

down, Jeremy Shockey lined up wide to the left. As soon as the ball was snapped, Mikell sprinted toward the corner in anticipation of a fade pattern.

"I don't know where he was trying to throw it," Mikell said. "I don't know if it was a fade. I just went up there and caught the ball."

Several New York players stood at the line of scrimmage after the play in disbelief. "I just threw a bad ball. I didn't throw it," Manning said.

The second half belonged to the Eagles. A 24-yard pass to Terrell Owens, who made four catches for 61 yards, set up Akers' 47-yard field goal. Safety Brian Dawkins' interception set up the second field goal.

The Eagles moved the ball only once in the first half, but their seven-play, 53-yard drive was enough for a 7-6 halftime lead. McNabb ignited the drive by breaking two tackles in the backfield en route to a 16-yard scramble. He capped it with a 4-yard TD run.

Seahawks hit new low with loss to lowly Bills

BY TIM KORTE
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — What's wrong with the Seattle Seahawks?

Ummmm. Got a minute? Just dropped passes, missed tackles and costly special-teams mistakes. There's been no offensive tempo for two weeks. Oh, and they were beaten decisively at home by a team that had lost six straight road games.

Willis McGahee rushed for 116 yards and four touchdowns on Sunday, leading Buffalo to a 38-9 victory over Seattle, the worst loss in coach Mike Holmgren's six seasons.

"I'm a little embarrassed by how we played," Holmgren said. "I expect more from the team in all areas. We flat-out weren't very good."

Credit Buffalo (5-6) for winning its first road game in five tries this season. McGahee was outstanding and Drew Bledsoe offset three interceptions by completing two-thirds of his passes for 275 yards and a touchdown.

"The defense set the tone," McGahee said. "We just fed off of that. The offensive line did a great job. It was just a robot running behind them."

"It's been too long since we've had the feeling of going on the road and beating somebody," Bledsoe said. "We finished the game. That's the big thing you can take out of this one. We didn't allow them to climb back in it."

With Bledsoe directing a no-huddle offense, McGahee followed a line that cleared his way. He scored on two 2-yard runs, took a lateral from Bledsoe for a 30-yard TD and added a 1-yard scoring run en route through the fourth quarter.

The Seahawks (6-5) hit their lowest point this season with an abysmal performance that nearly emptied the stadium of 66,271 fans at the 5-minute mark.

They lost for the second time in five home games after going 8-0 in Seattle last season. It also clipped the most lopsided loss of Holmgren's tenure, a 31-3 defeat at Oakland on Oct. 22, 2000.

Remarkably, the Seahawks will remain atop the up-for-grabs NFC West for less than another week. Seattle holds a half-game lead over St. Louis (5-5), which played Monday night at Green Bay.

"Here's the good thing: No matter what happens Monday, we're still in first place," said Shaun Alexander, who came in as the NFL's leading rusher but was held to 39 yards rushing on 13 carries.

Every team plays a bad game at some point, so Seattle can think "mulligan" for next week's game against Dallas (4-7). Holmgren reiterated his belief that a playoff run is possible, "but not the way we played today."



Pittsburgh quarterback Ben Roethlisberger scrambles for yardage during Sunday's 16-7 victory over the Washington Redskins.

Rookie Roethlisberger is 9-0

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Steelers improved to 10-1 for the first time since 1975 by beating the Washington Redskins 16-7 on Sunday, their ninth straight victory with rookie Ben Roethlisberger starting at quarterback.

Antwan Randall El, making only his second NFL start at receiver, scampered through the Redskins' coverage team on punt returns of 60 and 43 yards to set up two first-half scores. Starting for the injured Plaxico Burress, Randall El also made two catches for 37 yards and drew a 32-yard pass-interference penalty.

Jerome Bettis, a surprise starter when Duane Staley unexpectedly sat out a fourth straight game with a sore hamstring, responded with 100 yards on 31 carries. Bet-

ties' 47th career 100-yard game matched Franco Harris' team record.

The Redskins (3-8) were held to 156 yards.

Chargers 34, Chiefs 31: At Kansas City, Mo., Nate Kaeding's 43-yard field goal with 2:24 left gave the Chargers (8-3) their first victory at Kansas City (3-8) in the last eight tries.

Jets 13, Cardinals 3: At Tempe, Ariz., Curtis Martin carried 24 times for 99 yards and Doug Brien kicked field goals of 28 and 46 yards for New York (8-3). The Jets held the Cardinals (4-7) to 245 yards.

Vikings 27, Jaguars 16: At Minneapolis, Kevin Williams repeated Byron Leftwich's fumble 77 yards for the clinching score

after rookie Kenechi Udezue sacked Leftwich from behind.

Randy Moss made a noticeable impact in his return for the Vikings (7-4). He caught a go-ahead touchdown pass in the third quarter among his four receptions for 40 yards. Fred Taylor ran for 147 yards for Jacksonville (6-5).

Texans 31, Titans 21: At Houston, David Carr threw for 201 yards and two TDs and Domanick Davis ran for a season-high 29 yards and a score to help the Texans (5-6) rally from an 18-point deficit to beat the Titans (4-7).

Panthers 21, Buccaneers 14: At Charlotte, N.C., Keary Colbert caught a 40-yard touchdown pass, his second of the game, with 20 seconds to play to lift Carolina (4-7) to its third straight victory. The Bucs also are 4-7.

Patriots defense trumps Ravens

BY HOWARD ULMAN
The Associated Press

FOXBORO, Mass. — Jarvis Green capped the Patriots' domination when he recovered the slippery ball in the end zone against a team known for its own defensive touchdowns.

That was the last scoring play in New England's 24-3 victory Sunday, a rare game in which the Baltimore Ravens had the second-best defense on the field.

"I think our defense showed that we can hang with the best of them," Patriots safety Rodney Harrison said.

New England (10-1) showed it could march through a rain-drenched field and the NFL's stingiest defense. The Patriots gained 314 yards, and Corey Dillon's 123 yards rushing were just one less than Baltimore's total output.

"We had no rhythm," Ravens coach Brian Billick said, "just couldn't get anything going."

Dillon ran for more than 100 yards for the fifth time in six games, hosting his season total to 1,121. Adam Vinatieri kicked three field goals, stretching his successful streak to 21 kicks.

"That was as bad of a field as I've ever played on," said Vinatieri, who has kicked big field goals with snow covering the ground. "This is a whole different set of situations. It's even more difficult for the guys handling the ball."

In their previous six games, the Ravens (7-4) scored four touchdowns on defense and gave up only five. On Sunday, the Patriots offense didn't turn the ball over, despite the rain, while the Ravens lost it twice.

The most important turnover came just 45 seconds after Dillon scored on a 1-yard run and 2-point conversion for a 17-3 lead on the Patriots' first possession of the fourth quarter. Baltimore got the ball back, and Kyle Boller was sacked on the next two plays — by Ted Johnson and Teddy Bruschi.

Bruschi's hit knocked the soggy

ball loose at the Baltimore 8-yard line. Chester Taylor, playing because running back Jamal Lewis missed the game with an ankle injury, dove after it but managed only to nudge it toward the end zone.

"The ball just spurted right out," Taylor said.

Green, a backup defensive end, didn't make that same mistake.

"I saw it slip out of his hands," Green said. "Then I went and attacked it, and it wasn't going to slip out of my hands."

New England won its fourth straight game despite having its top three cornerbacks sidelined by Law, Tyrone Poole and Asante Samuel — while Baltimore's winning streak ended at three.

All the Ravens could manage was a 22-yard field goal by Matt Stover 2 seconds before halftime.

The Patriots set an NFL record by scoring first in their 16th straight regular-season game, breaking a tie for the mark set by Miami in 1978. But the Ravens managed to stop another streak in the first quarter — 16 consecutive quarters in which the Patriots scored.

"Once they got control of the game, that's an awful hard team to beat," Billick said.

Baltimore had given up a league-low 14 points a game in its first 10 games and allowed just one offensive touchdown Sunday on Dillon's run with 2 seconds gone in the fourth quarter.

"That's a tough defense. They're known for intimidating people," Dillon said. "I'd rather do the hitting than be hit." Then Boller got a taste of what his defense usually inflicts on opposing quarterbacks when New England, which had allowed the sixth fewest points in the league, went after him and sacked him twice, the last resulting in Green's touchdown.

"They're a great team," said Boller, who was 15-for-35 for 93 yards and was sacked four times. "They force you to try and make throws downfield. . . . It wasn't raining so hard that I couldn't throw it."



49ers quarterback Tim Rattay fumbles after being tackled by the Dolphins' Jay Williams in the fourth quarter.

49ers prove to be weakest link

BY GREG BEACHAM
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The Miami Dolphins spent the holiday week eating room service food and practicing thousands of miles from home, all to prove they were the best of the NFL's worst two teams.

And for the first time in Miami's dismal season, something went according to plan.

Randy McMichael caught a 15-yard touchdown pass with 10:35 to play, and the 49ers fumbled five times in the fourth quarter of the Dolphins' 24-17 victory Sunday, leaving hapless San Francisco as the league's only one-win team.

It was the game of the week, the battle of the bads — a meeting of two once-proved franchises brought to historic lows by injuries, infighting, poor management and insufficient talent.

After last week's loss at Seattle, the Dolphins held up in San Francisco for a second training camp of sorts. Largely thanks to its stifling defense, Miami finished its road trip at 500.

"If we would have lost this game after spending six days in San Francisco, it would have been really miserable," said cornerback Patrick Surtain, who re-

covered two fumbles. "To come out here with a win, even though these guys are 1-9, we showed a lot of heart. It was huge for us, and hopefully we can build on this."

San Francisco's surreal inability to hold on to the ball was the most eye-catching part of a game decidedly lacking in artistry, from the 16 punts to the seemingly endless series of gaffes and stumbles. Miami (2-9) snapped its three-game losing streak with just 200 total yards.

Capped by Derrick Pope's 1-yard fumble return for the clinching touchdown with 3:10 left, the Dolphins scored 17 points off San Francisco's fumbles in the fourth quarter to get the first victories for interim coach Jim Bates and starting quarterback A.J. Feeley.

Hopefully, Bates — the Dolphins' defensive coordinator until Dave Wannstedt's resignation two weeks ago — will remember only his unit's strong performance, which included eight sacks, and not the ineptitude of just about everything and everybody else.

"A lot of teams, when you are 1-9, you will not see the determination and effort week in and week out that we have given," Bates said. "It is special to be part of this group."

Miami held San Francisco to 228 yards — 69 on a desperate last-minute drive culminating in Maurice Hicks' score with 37 seconds left.

Tim Rattay passed for 181 yards and fumbled three times for the 49ers (1-10), who lost their sixth straight and surged past Miami for the inside track on the top pick in next April's draft. They've also got an excellent shot at the worst record in franchise history: the Niners went 2-14 in 1978 and 1979.

Once again, coach Dennis Erickson was baffled to see his offense waste an outstanding performance by the defense. Rattay's offensive line seems to regress with every game, and expected stars Kevan Barlow and Brandon Lloyd have been invisible.

"I want for Holcomb to have playing, you can't operate like we're operating," he said. "We all feel helpless, sure. This is just not the way I envisioned us functioning on offense. We have no rhythm. It's been a mess, there isn't any other way to put it."

Fittingly for these teams, the game turned on turnovers. San Francisco linebacker Derek Smith returned a fumble 46 yards for his first career touchdown early in the fourth quarter for a 10-7 lead, but Surtain recovered Hicks' fumble moments later.

Points: No shortage of long plays in unexpected shootout

POINTS, FROM BACK PAGE

Even then, everyone was expecting more.

"It was like a pinball machine the way the scoreboard was lighting up," Bengals linebacker Brian Simmons said.

No one saw it coming.

It started as a referendum on the two head coaches, and quickly turned into a rewrite of the record books. The points came so fast that it seemed a recount might be needed to determine who won Ohio's bragging rights.

"In the middle of the second quarter, I just said, 'OK, it's going to be a shootout,'" Browns receiver Dennis Northcutt said.

The 106 points were the second most in an NFL game, trailing only the Redskins' 72-41 victory over the Giants on Nov. 27, 1966.

Until Sunday, the most points in a game since the NFL-AFL merger in 1970 was 99 points by the Kansas City 51-48 in overtime on Nov. 27, 1983.

Who knew these two teams had it in them? Certainly no one expected it from the Browns, who had to change quarterbacks after Jeff Garcia hurt his shoulder a week earlier.

Plus, injuries forced yet another shuffle of the makeshift offensive line, which has used five combinations this season.

"It was tough," Davis said. "It was very tough."

Bengals coach Marvin Lewis had a tough week, too. He'd screamed at his players after a feeble loss to Pittsburgh, and was looking to see how they responded to the outburst.

It wasn't exactly what he had in mind.

"We were attacking all of the time, but we didn't play smart all the time," Lewis said.

The pattern was set early.

The Browns' usually reliable defense couldn't stop Johnson, who took advantage of huge holes and sloppy tackles. His big day included runs of 52, 21 and 28 yards.

The Bengals' up-and-down defense had problems in pass coverage, giving up eight receptions of 20 or more yards.

Overall, there were 15 plays that went for at least 20 yards, including five plays for 46 yards or more. When teams are picking up half of a football field in one chunk, the points are going to add up fast.

"Our mind-set was that they could not stop us — that we could only stop ourselves," said Palmer, who was 22-for-29 for 251 yards with three interceptions. "We knew we could keep scoring like we had

done all game, and I don't think anyone thought for one second that we wouldn't."

The same can be said for Holcomb, who completed 30 of 39 passes for 413 yards, the second-highest total of his career.

One mistake decided it.

Trying to drive the Browns to a tying field goal or go-ahead touchdown in the closing minutes, Holcomb saw tight end Aaron Shea by the sideline, guarded by O'Neal. Holcomb threw it anyway.

The way the defenses had been playing, who could fault him?

"I saw him, but I thought he was off far enough," Holcomb said. "I should have thrown it away, but that's one of those things that happens."

O'Neal broke on the ball, caught it cleanly and ran in untouched, effectively ending a game of endless offense.

"It was crazy," Johnson summed up. "Just crazy."

Saints don't have a player of stopping Vick in Atlanta

Versatile QB throws for 2 TDs, runs for another

BY PAUL NEWBERRY
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — The New Orleans Saints knew what they were up against — and there wasn't much they could do when Michael Vick started running around.

Vick added another play to his highlight reel, throwing a 20-yard highlight pass to Alge Crumpler with 1:22 remaining to give the Atlanta Falcons a 24-21 victory Sunday.

This was vintage Vick.

He took the snap and looked left, but had to dart right to avoid the rush. Then, changing directions suddenly, he sprinted back to the left to get away from more pressure. A Saints player sprawled on the turf took a swipe at Vick's legs as he went by, but the quarterback managed to rattle the pass to Crumpler at the pylon.

"Hey, the Falcons have a secret weapon over there who is the league's worst-kept secret," Saints cornerback Mike McKenzie said. "He's from another world."

Crumpler isn't too bad, either.

The Pro Bowl tight end boxed out Jason Craft like a basketball player going for a rebound, and easily made the catch when the cornerback fell down.

Crumpler also caught a 27-yard pass that set up the winning touchdown, finishing with four receptions for 103 yards. All of his catches were for at least 20 yards, improving his season average to 16.5 — astounding for a tight end.

Afterward, Crumpler sat at his locker, working out his per-catch numbers on a calculator.

"That's the only thing my dad ever talks about," he said. "He always wants to know what I'm averaging."

James Allen appeared to save the Saints when he stripped the



Falcons tight end Alge Crumpler, top, jumps to avoid Saints defender Mel Mitchell after making a catch in the fourth quarter Sunday in Atlanta. Crumpler caught the decisive TD pass in Atlanta's 24-21 victory.

ball from Warrick Dunn at the New Orleans 6 with 3:11 to go. But Vick still had time to bail out the Falcons (9-2).

The Saints (4-7) went three-and-out, and Atlanta took over at the New Orleans 47. Vick had nearly 2 minutes to work with, but he and Crumpler needed only two plays to get the Falcons into the end zone. They got things started with a 27-yard play, as Crumpler found a seam in the New Orleans zone.

"I always feel like we're going to score a touchdown," Vick said. "I have confidence I can do almost anything when I step out there."

Vick had a hand in all three Atlanta touchdowns. He passed for two scores, completing 16 of 29 for 212 yards. He also ran 16 yards for a TD and led the Falcons with 69 yards on 10 carries.

No one remembered the interception that set up New Orleans' go-ahead touchdown.

The Saints looked much better than a high school team — the comparison owner Tom Benson made after an ugly 34-13 loss to Denver last week. But it didn't stop New Orleans from its sixth loss in eight games.

"Gosh, we played out hearts out," defensive end Charles Grant said. "When they find a way to win like that, it's a heart-breaker."

Atlanta is virtually assured of the third division title in franchise history, leading the other three teams in the NFC South by five games with five to play.

"We're for real," Crumpler said.

The Saints fell behind 14-0 early in the second quarter and were down 17-6 at the half before Aaron Brooks rallied his team. He scored on a 1-yard sneak and threw to Joe Horn on a 2-point conversion, pulling the Saints to 17-14.

Vick then made a huge blunder. Trying to set up a screen, he threw the ball right to Grant. The 290-pounder rumbled 8 yards to the Atlanta 30, and Brooks finished it off with a 7-yard touchdown pass to Horn with 11:56 remaining.

It was the first time all season that Atlanta had given up a lead in the fourth quarter.

Deuce McAllister ran 23 times for 100 yards for the Saints, while Nick Gonsky, Panthers, ran for 106 yards in a 21-14 win over Tampa Bay, a week after rushing for a career-high 121.

Touchdown run, in a 31-21 win over the Titans, Davis added seven receptions for 52 yards in a 27-10 loss to Minnesota.

Fred Taylor, Jaguars, had 147 yards on 22 carries in a 27-10 loss to Minnesota. Corey Dillon, Patriots, rushed for 123 yards and a touchdown in a 24-3 win over Baltimore.

Nick Gonsky, Panthers, ran for 106 yards in a 21-14 win over Tampa Bay, a week after rushing for a career-high 121.

Chad Johnson, Bengals, had 117 yards and a touchdown on 10 receptions in a 28-48 win over Cleveland.

Keary Colbert, Panthers, caught a 40-yard touchdown pass, his second of the game, with 20 seconds remaining to lift Carolina to a 21-14 victory over Bucs. Colbert finished with 72 yards on three catches.

Michael Pittman, Bucs, had eight catches for 134 yards and touchdown on 6 and 8 yards in a 21-14 loss to Carolina.

Pittman, the starting running back, only had 29 yards rushing on 18 carries.



Denver Broncos wide receiver Rod Smith, top, is spended by Oakland Raiders safety Stuart Schweigert after a short gain in the fourth quarter of the Raiders' 25-24 victory in Denver on Sunday.

A complete snow job by Raiders in Denver

BY EDDIE PELLIS
The Associated Press

DENVER — Leading by 11 late in the game, playing at home in the snow, the Denver Broncos looked well on their way to win No. 8 and a share of first place in the AFC West.

As it turned out, though, the Silver and Black looked more at home in the white stuff than Denver did.

Kerry Collins threw for 339 yards and threw three of his four touchdowns to Jerry Porter to lead the Oakland Raiders to a come-from-behind upset in the snow Sunday night, 25-24 over the Broncos.

"We could have packed it up, but we didn't," Raiders coach Norv Turner said.

Collins' final TD pass to Porter was the winner — on fourth-and-goal from the 5 with 1:49 remaining. Porter, who beat Champ Bailey for his first two TDs and another 52-yard reception, looked in his element on a winter-wonderland kind of night.

"It was hell out there," Porter said. "But it was cold, too."

After Oakland took the lead, Jack Plummer drove the Broncos to the Raiders 25 to set up Jason Elam's go-ahead field goal attempt.

But the snap was high, Elam kicked the face-side of the ball and Langston Walker blocked the kick to preserve the win for the Raiders (4-7), who will surely

count this as a major highlight of a difficult year.

"I don't know if anyone outside our own group thought we could do this," Turner said.

The Broncos (7-4) fell one game behind the Chargers in the AFC West with a game at San Diego coming next week. The weather will surely be better there. Coach Mike Shanahan wasn't using that as an excuse for this loss, though.

"Both teams had to play in the same conditions," Shanahan said. "They made some big plays and we had a few big plays, too. But they made the plays when it counted and found a way to get it done."

Oakland's winning touchdown was set up by a 63-yard completion from Collins to Ronald Curry, who a few minutes earlier made a spectacular one-handed grab in the back of the end zone to cut it to 24-19.

Collins finished 26-for-45 and showed no fear of Bailey.

His first touchdown to Porter came on a post route down the middle of the field in which Bailey let the Raiders receiver slip behind him. The second was on a simple slant in which Collins rifled the ball perfectly and Bailey couldn't prevent Porter from making the catch or tackle him before he crossed the goal line.

"The plays were there," Collins said. "It just happened to be Champ on the coverage. Our whole receiving group made plays."

Antonio Gates, Chargers, had a 27-yard catch for the clinching touchdown in a 34-31 win over Kansas City.

Alge Crumpler, Falcons, had four catches for 103 yards and the game-winning 28-yard scoring reception in a 24-21 win over New Orleans.

Defense

Kevin Williams, Vikings, returned a fumble 77 yards for the clinching score in a 27-16 win over the Jaguars.

Julius Peppers, Panthers, ran an interception back 46 yards for a score, blocked a field goal and had Carolina to a 21-14 win over Tampa Bay.

Dwaine O'Neal, Bengals, returned an interception 31 yards for a touchdown with 1:43 to play, sealing Cincinnati's 58-48 win over Cleveland.

Sam Green, Patriots, returned a fumble in the end zone in a 24-21 win over Baltimore.

Sunday's NFL stars:

Quarterbacks

■ Drew Brees, Chargers, was 28-for-37 for 378 yards and two touchdowns in a 34-31 win over Kansas City.

■ Kelly Holcomb, Browns, went 30-for-39 for 412 yards, the second-most yards in his career, and five touchdowns in a 58-48 loss to Cincinnati.

■ Carson Palmer, Bengals, threw a career-high four touchdown passes and finished 22-for-29 for 251 yards.

■ Brian Griese, Bucs, went 27-for-39 for 347 yards, two touchdowns and an interception in a 21-14 loss to Carolina.

Running backs

■ Rudi Johnson, Bengals, ran for a season-high 202 yards and two scores in 26 carries in a 58-48 win over Cleveland.

■ Willis McVay, Bills, had 116 yards and four touchdowns on 28 carries in a 38-9 win over Seattle.

■ Domanick Davis, Texans, rushed for a season-high 129 yards, including a 41-yard

touchdown run, in a 31-21 win over the Titans.

■ Fred Taylor, Jaguars, had 147 yards on 22 carries in a 27-10 loss to Minnesota.

■ Corey Dillon, Patriots, rushed for 123 yards and a touchdown in a 24-3 win over Baltimore.

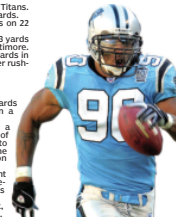
■ Nick Gonsky, Panthers, ran for 106 yards in a 21-14 win over Tampa Bay, a week after rushing for a career-high 121.

■ Chad Johnson, Bengals, had 117 yards and a touchdown on 10 receptions in a 28-48 win over Cleveland.

■ Keary Colbert, Panthers, caught a 40-yard touchdown pass, his second of the game, with 20 seconds remaining to lift Carolina to a 21-14 victory over Bucs. Colbert finished with 72 yards on three catches.

■ Michael Pittman, Bucs, had eight catches for 134 yards and touchdown on 6 and 8 yards in a 21-14 loss to Carolina.

Pittman, the starting running back, only had 29 yards rushing on 18 carries.



SPORTS



Auburn needs USC or Oklahoma to stumble if it's to have a shot at a national title, Page 33

Points and counterpoints

Bengals top Browns as teams score second-highest total in NFL history

BY JOE KAY

The Associated Press

CINCINNATI — It resembled a pickup game in a city park — felt like it, too.

More than 100 points. Almost 1,000 yards of offense. Thirteen touchdowns, most scored with outlandish ease.

Two-hand touch? No, this was the NFL. Really.

The Cincinnati Bengals beat the intrastate rival Cleveland Browns 58-48 on Sunday, a performance that rewrote both teams' record books and immediately became a classic — the second-most points scored in league history.

"It was an incredible day," said receiver Kelley Washington, who scored the first of Cincinnati's seven touchdowns. "It was one of those games where you could have gone out and marked up plays in the dirt, thrown the ball around and run up and down the field."

Up and down they went, all afternoon.

NFL's highest scoring games

A list of NFL games in which teams combined to score 95 points or more:
 113 — Washington 72, N.Y. Giants 41, Nov. 27, 1966
 106 — Cincinnati 56, Cleveland 48, Nov. 26, 2004
 101 — Oakland 52, Houston 49, Dec. 22, 1963
 99 — Seattle 51, Kansas City 48 (OT), Nov. 27, 1983
 98 — Chicago Cardinals 61, N.Y. Giants 35, Oct. 17, 1948
 96 — San Diego 54, Pittsburgh 44, Dec. 8, 1985
 97 — Los Angeles Rams 70, Baltimore 27, Oct. 22, 1950
 96 — New York Jets 51, Miami 45 (OT), Sept. 21, 1986
 95 — Green Bay 48, Washington 47, Oct. 17, 1983
 95 — Philadelphia 58, Detroit 37, Dec. 30, 1992
 (x-wild card game)

The Bengals (5-6) got a career-high four touchdown passes from Carson Palmer and a season-high 202 yards and two TDs from Rudi Johnson.

On the other side, Kelly Holcomb passed for a career-high five TDs and 400 yards, keeping the Browns (3-9) in position for an improbable win until the very end. Deltha O'Neal's interception and 31-yard touchdown return provided the final points with 1:43 to play.

SEE POINTS ON PAGE 38



AP photos

Deltha O'Neal, above left, celebrates his interception return for a touchdown late in the fourth quarter that sealed the Bengals victory, negating the performance of Browns tight end Steve Heiden, above right, who caught three touchdown passes in the losing effort.



Raiders' late flurry buries Broncos

Raiders receiver Jerry Porter breaks free from Broncos cornerback Champ Bailey during the fourth quarter. Porter burned Bailey for two touchdowns before hauling in the game-winner with 1:49 left as Oakland rallied in the snow at Denver with two touchdowns in the final 6:11. See story on Page 39.

AP

